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OF

WORDS AND PHRASES

USUALLY REGARDED AS PECULIAR TO

THE UNITED STATES.

BY

JOHN RUSSELL BARTLETT.

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SECOND EDITION,

, GREATLY IMPROVED AND ENLARGED.

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# PREFACE

## TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE first edition of this Dictionary was published in New York in 1848. It met with a quick sale, and soon passed out of print. Aware of its many imperfections, I began my preparations for a new edition before it had fully left the press. From that time to the day the last sheets of this edition left my hands for the printer, now ten years, I have been more or less occupied in its preparation. Nearly three years of this period I spent in the interior of the country, in the service of the United States as Commissioner on the Mexican Boundary; but even there, I failed not to note the peculiarities of the familiar language of the frontier, and carefully recorded the words and phrases I met with for future use. This experience enabled me to collect the singular words occurring in prairie and frontier life as well as those common to Texas, New Mexico, and California. Most of these have come from the Spanish, and are now fairly engrafted on our language.

The other alterations and improvements made in this edition, consist in the addition of a very large number of words and phrases peculiar to the United States; so that it now contains probably twice as many as the first edition. The examples or illustrations from authors, showing the use of words, have also been greatly multiplied. This seemed desirable, as examples convey a far more correct idea of their meaning and use than a simple definition. The histories of words and their definitions have also been corrected and improved.

In the additions to this work, I have to acknowledge valuable contribu-

tions from several friends, who took an interest in the subject. To the Rev. WM. S. MURPHY, President of the University of Missouri, I am indebted for many words and phrases peculiar to the West. To Mr. JOHN GILMARY SHEA for New York words; to Dr. A. L. ELWYN of Philadelphia, for the use of a manuscript vocabulary of Americanisms collected by him; to Mr. JAMES MITCHELL, of Nantucket, for words in use in that island; to Professor GEO. C. SCHAEFFER of Washington, for many terms of natural history, words relating to the arts, and Westernisms; and to Dr. FRANCIS LIEBER, of Columbia College, New York, for many sound remarks, of which I have availed myself in the pages of the work.

Large additions have been made to the common terms of plants, trees, and fruits of the United States, as well as of those which enter into our commerce. These, being familiar words of our language, seem as worthy of being noted and explained as others. For valuable contributions to this class of words I am indebted to Dr. EDWARD FOREMAN, of Washington; while Mr. ALEX. J. COTHEAL, a merchant of New York, and well known in the field of Oriental literature, has kindly furnished me the common names of the trees, fruits, nuts, etc. which enter into our commerce.

In preparing the first edition of this work, I was at a loss what to include in the collection of words; and, preferring to err on the side of copiousness, admitted many words common to the colloquial language of England and this country, which have now been rejected to make way for pure Americanisms. Of the words so rejected there are nearly eight hundred; the following are examples: *above-board*, *Adam's ale*, *to advocate*, *afeard*, *afore*, *afterclaps*, *bamboozle*, *to bark one's shins*, *bobtail*, *bogtrotter*, *bolt-upright*, *boozy*, *bo-peep*, *to bore*, *born days*, *bran new*, *brown study*, *by-the-by*, *to hold a candle*, *to catch a Tartar*, *caterwaul*, *catpaw*, *to chalk out*, *chink*, *chouse*, *chuffy*, *circumbendibus*, *clap-trap*, *clinch*, *clout*, *cool*, *cosey*, *cowlick*, *crambo*, *criss-cross*, *cross-grained*, *crotchety*, *crowsfeet*, *curmudgeon*, *curry favor*, *to cut one's acquaintance*, *cut and run*, *cut a dash*, *dabster*, *dead alive*, *dawdle*, *demijohn*, *duds*, *Dick's hatband*, *dilly-dally*, *dog cherp*, *down in the mouth*, *driving at*, *dummy*, *elbow grease*, *to feather one's nest*, etc., etc.

A good many such words have nevertheless been retained, on the principle that a word now used only in some out-of-the-way locality in England, but quite general here, may be regarded as a peculiarity of the English

language as spoken in America, i. e. an Americanism; but as it is often impossible to know with exactness to what extent a word is used in England, it is likely that many of these should properly have been omitted.

Many words common to the colloquial language both of England and America have been allowed to remain because they have not yet been honored with a place in the current standard Dictionaries. Of these there are many which in the glossaries are ascribed to "various dialects," and which should be inserted in any general Dictionary of the English language which aims at completeness. Were such a work as the new English Dictionary projected by the Philological Society of London already in existence, the insertion of a large number of words of this class could have been dispensed with.

From what has been said it will be seen that the present edition, while it does not wholly reject words of English origin, claims to be more strictly American than the first. At the same time, the first edition will still have a value of its own, as showing more fully how much of the colloquial language of England is retained in use in this country.

Due attention has been given to some valuable criticisms on the first edition, in a paper by the late Dr. Felix Flügel, entitled "*Die englische Philologie in Nordamerika*," which appeared in Gersdorf's Repertorium for 1852; also, to criticisms which appeared in the "Western Continent" newspaper of Philadelphia, and the "Literary World" of New York, soon after the publication of the volume. Some excellent illustrations have been obtained from a paper on "Canadian English," by the Rev. A. Constable Geikie, read before the Canadian Institute 28th of March, 1857, and printed in its Journal.

The first edition was translated into the Dutch language under the title of "*Woordenboek van Americanismen, etc. Bewerkt door M. Keijzer. Gorinchem, 1854*," leaving out the quotations which illustrate the use of words. It was hoped that this work would furnish assistance in settling the etymology and meaning of some of the old Dutch words still used in New York; but it has proved of little use.

At the close of the book will be found a small collection of American similes and proverbs, together with the abbreviations of the names of States, etc., which were inserted in the body of the first edition.

To my friend, Mr. WILLIAM W. TURNER, of Washington, I take pleasure in again making my acknowledgments for the valuable aid furnished me in the present as well as in the former edition, not only for the contribution of numerous words and illustrations, but for his correction and supervision of the whole work.

J. R. B.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., March, 1859.

# P R E F A C E

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

---

IN venturing to lay before the public a Vocabulary of the colloquial language of the United States, some explanation may be necessary for the broad ground I have been led to occupy.

I began to make a list of such words as appeared to be, or at least such as had generally been called, Americanisms, or peculiar to the United States, and, at the same time, made reference to the several authors in whose writings they appeared; not knowing whether, in reality, they were of native growth, or whether they had been introduced from England. When this list had expanded so as to embrace a large number of the words used in familiar conversation, both among the educated as well as among the uneducated and rustic classes, the next object was to examine the dialects and provincialisms of those parts of England from which the early settlers of New England and our other colonies emigrated.

The provincialisms of New England are more familiar to our ears than those of any other section of the United States, as they are not confined within the limits of those States, but have extended to New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan; which States have been, to a great extent, settled by emigrants from New England.

On comparing these familiar words with the provincial and colloquial language of the northern counties of England, a most striking resemblance appeared not only in the words commonly regarded as peculiar to New England, but in the dialectical pronunciation of certain words, and in the general tone and accent. In fact it may be said, without exaggeration, that nine tenths of the colloquial peculiarities of New England are derived

directly from Great Britain; and that they are now provincial in those parts from which the early colonists emigrated, or are to be found in the writings of well accredited authors of the period when that emigration took place. Consequently it is obvious that we have the best authority for the use of the words referred to.

It may be insisted, therefore, that the idiom of New England is as pure English, taken as a whole, as was spoken in England at the period when these colonies were settled. In making this assertion, I do not take as a standard the nasal twang, the drawling enunciation, or those perversions of language which the ignorant and uneducated adopt. Nor would I acknowledge the abuse of many of our most useful words. For these perversions I make no other defence or apology but that they occur in all countries and in every language.

Having found the case to be as stated, I had next to decide between a vocabulary of words of purely American origin, or one in which should be embraced all those words usually called provincial or vulgar — all the words, whatever be their origin, which are used in familiar conversation, and but seldom employed in composition — all the perversions of language, and abuses of words into which people, in certain sections of the country, have fallen, and some of those remarkable and ludicrous forms of speech which have been adopted in the Western States. The latter plan seemed the most satisfactory, and this I determined to adopt.\*

With so broad a ground, many words must necessarily be embraced which are to be found in the dictionaries of Drs. Johnson and Webster, with the

\* The term "Americanisms," as used in this Dictionary, may then be said to include the following classes of words:

1. Archaisms, i. e. old English words, obsolete, or nearly so, in England, but retained in use in this country.
2. English words used in a different sense from what they are in England. These include many names of natural objects differently applied.
3. Words which have retained their original meaning in the United States, although not in England.
4. English provincialisms adopted into general use in America.
5. Newly coined words, which owe their origin to the productions or to the circumstances of the country.
6. Words borrowed from European languages, especially the French, Spanish, Dutch, and German.
7. Indian words.
8. Negroisms.
9. Peculiarities of pronunciation. — [*Note to Second Edition.*]

remark that they are low or vulgar, or only to be heard in familiar conversation. Another class, not in the dictionaries referred to, is contained in the provincial glossaries of England. A third class, entirely distinct from the preceding, consists of slang words which are not noticed by lexicographers, yet are so much employed as to deserve a place in a glossary.

Such is the plan which I have thought most advisable to adopt, and which I hope will give satisfaction. In carrying out this plan, I have endeavored to give the most accurate definitions, citing the authorities in all cases where I have been enabled to find any. Except as regards words of purely American origin (e. g. those derived from the Indian languages and from the Dutch), I have generally kept aloof from etymologies and etymological discussions. These the reader will find in abundance — such as they are — in the works of Johnson, Todd, Webster, and others.

Words of a provincial character, and such as have become obsolete in composition, are often of doubtful signification. Illustrations, from well-known authors, wherein such words are employed, are of service in arriving at their true meaning. These have been employed in the present glossary, and serve the double purpose of illustration, and of rendering the book more readable than if confined to a dry collection of definitions. This mode of showing the sense in which words have been employed by authors, was first practised on a comprehensive scale by Dr. Johnson, whose labors are thereby greatly enhanced in value to the philologist; and has since been carried out more completely in Mr. Richardson's dictionary.

The class of words which are purely American in their origin and use, I have also attempted to illustrate, by extracts from American authors whose writings relate to that class of people among which these words are chiefly found. These books contain descriptions of country life, scenes in the backwoods, popular tales, etc., in which the colloquial or familiar language of particular States predominates. The humorous writings of Judge Haliburton of Nova Scotia give a tolerably correct though exaggerated specimen of the provincialisms of New England. The letters of Major Downing are of the same character, and portray the dialect of New England with less exaggeration.\* There are no books in which the Western words and

\* Among other books from which I have quoted examples of the use of words common to New England and the Northern States, are Judd's "Margaret," the "Widow Bedott Papers," "The Bigelow Papers," and the Sermons of Dow, Junior. — [*Note to Second Edition.*]

phrases are so fully exhibited; though all the works which aim to illustrate Western life contain more or less of the idioms peculiar to the people. Judge Hall, Mrs. Kirkland (*Mary Clavers*), the author of the *New Purchase*, Charles F. Hoffman, and various tourists, have displayed in their several works the peculiarities of the people of the West, and occasionally their language. Mr. Crockett, however, himself a native of that region, associating from infancy with its woodsmen, hunters, and farmers, whose language is full of quaint words and figures of speech, has unintentionally made us better acquainted with the colloquial language of the West than any other author.

I am also indebted to a series of books published by Messrs. Carey and Hart, called the "*Library of Humorous American Works*," which consist of a series of tales and adventures in the South-west and West, by Wm. T. Porter, editor of the *New York Spirit of the Times*; John S. Robb and J. M. Field, Esquires, of St. Louis, Missouri; the editor of the *New Orleans Picayune*; and some anonymous writers. In these several works the drolleries and quaint sayings of the West are admirably incorporated into tales of the settlers, their manners and customs, vivid descriptions of Western scenery, political and dramatic scenes, etc. We have no books which present so graphic an account of Western life, related in the exaggerated and metaphorical language peculiar to the people of that region.

In Southern provincialisms I find myself most deficient, having seen no books except Major Jones's "*Courtship*" and "*Sketches*," "*Georgia Scenes*," and "*Sherwood's Gazetteer of Georgia*," in which, however, a considerable number of local words are to be found.

The newspapers have afforded me many illustrations of the use of words, which I have not failed to make use of. These illustrations, it will be seen, are chiefly from the New York papers, viz. the *Commercial Advertiser*, the *Tribune*, and the *Herald*, for the simple reason that I have been in the practice of reading them daily. When I met with a word or phrase peculiarly American, or one which was employed in a sense differing from the use of the same in England, it was at once noticed and secured. All our newspapers contain more or less colloquial words; in fact, there seems no other way of expressing certain ideas connected with passing events of every-day life, with the requisite force and piquancy. In the English newspapers the same thing is observable, and certain of them contain more of the class



denominated *slang* words than our own. The Whig papers throughout the United States employ certain political terms in advocating the principles of their party, and in denouncing those of their opponents. The Democratic papers pursue a similar course. The advocates and opponents of Abolition, Fourierism, etc., invent and employ many words peculiar to themselves. So with the religious sects; each new-fangled notion brings into existence some addition to our language, though that addition is not always an improvement.

The value of this Glossary would have been greatly enhanced, if, as is usual in the compilation of similar works, I had been able to avail myself of the assistance of persons residing in various parts of our country. No collection of words, professing to contain the colloquial language of the entire country, can approach any degree of completeness or correctness, without the aid of many hands and heads. None but a native of New England, educated on her soil, and who has mingled with all classes of society, has the requisite familiarity with the words and phrases peculiar to her people. So with the Western and Southern provincialisms. One born and brought up where they are spoken, who has heard and used them when a boy, and grown up in their midst, can alone portray them in their true sense. The aid of such persons it was impossible to procure, and the words here brought together have been, with very few exceptions, collected by myself. The deficiencies and imperfections are such, therefore, as could not be avoided under the circumstances.

The words of Dutch origin, most if not all of which are used or understood in the city of New York and those portions of its vicinity colonized by natives of Holland, were furnished by Mr. ALEXANDER J. COTHEAL, a gentleman born and educated in New York, whose learning in other branches of philological science is well known to many. A few other words have been given me from time to time by other friends, who knew that I was making this collection. To all of these I am happy to express my acknowledgments.

When the work had advanced far towards completion, and one half had been put in type, the occurrence of some terms common in political language, the exact meaning of which was not clear, led me to apply to my friend JOHN INMAN, Esq., editor of the New York Commercial Advertiser, for aid. He readily complied with my request, and kindly furnished the definitions of

several terms of daily occurrence in the political language of the day. I regret that I did not have his valuable aid in defining and illustrating the use of words and phrases which occur in the early part of this Glossary. The contributions of Mr. Inman are acknowledged where they appear.

To my friend Mr. WM. W. TURNER I am under great obligations for aid rendered me in preparing this work for the press. Mr. Turner's extensive acquaintance with the European and Oriental languages, together with an unusual sagacity in philological criticism, have peculiarly fitted him to give aid in the preparation of a work like this. I have, therefore, submitted the whole to his supervision, and adopted his views in all my conclusions. At his suggestion I have struck out many etymologies taken from standard dictionaries, which it was evident were wholly erroneous.

In noticing the words embraced in this Glossary, the reader will probably think that many have been admitted which ought not to have a place in a Dictionary of American Provincialisms. From what has already been said, it will be seen that it is very difficult to draw the line between what should be admitted and what excluded; and I have thought it better to err on the side of copiousness, than by too rigid a system of selection to run into the opposite extreme.

A careful perusal of nearly all the English glossaries has enabled me to select what appeared most desirable to embrace, and what to avoid, in an American book of a similar kind. Cant words, except such as are in general use, the terms used at gaming-houses, purely technical words, and those only known to certain trades, obscene and blasphemous words, have been discarded.

For a better understanding of the subject, as well as to show the importance of collecting and preserving the colloquial dialects of our country, I have prefixed to the Vocabulary some remarks on language, in which the reader will find that the study of dialects and provincialisms is considered as worthy the attention of philologists, as the investigation of the language of literature.

J. R. B.

NEW YORK, 1848.

# INTRODUCTION.

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## DIALECTS OF ENGLAND.

THE most recent investigations in which the science of philology has been brought to bear on the English language, have shown that it is of purely Gothic origin, descended through languages, of which sufficient remains to make grammatical as well as etymological comparisons practicable. It is true that some have regarded it as a perfect mongrel, without any natural parent, compounded of various languages and dialects, Greek, Latin, Saxon, French, Welsh, etc., etc. But although the language is very much mixed, it is a question whether it is not as pure, and as closely allied to the Anglo-Saxon and, *Moeso-Gothic*, as the languages in the south of Europe are to the Latin. Or, in other words, it is probable that the English is not more impregnated with words of the Latin stock, than the Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese are with words of the Teutonic stock.

The natural tendency of language is to improve; and when a people cannot express in a comprehensive manner a particular idea or shade of meaning, they either form a word to denote it from a root or roots already in the language, or borrow a word from other languages which expresses it already.

With regard to the English language this last-mentioned process has been adopted to an extent which, while it has enriched our vocabulary with a vast number of terms, has, it must be confessed, greatly impaired its reproductive power. The original substratum of Anglo-Saxon speech has been overlaid with multitudes of common and conversational words from the French, literary and ecclesiastical terms from the Latin, and technicalities from the Greek; and the process is constantly going on. Yet in spite of these immense accessions to its vocabulary, the structure of the English has remained in all essential respects the same from the period when it first became a language. Moreover, the number of foreign importations con-

tained in our dictionaries, gives by no means a correct idea of the number of such words which we actually make use of. The greater part of our household, colloquial, and poetical expressions are Saxon, and so are all those important words called particles, on which the whole structure of speech hinges; whereas an immense number of the words derived from other sources belong exclusively to the language of books, and many even to particular sciences.

There is another fact to be observed, which is, that these different classes of words are not used in the same proportion by all members of society. Persons without education, and who are consequently not familiar with the language of literature, employ almost exclusively in their conversation the simple and expressive Saxon terms; while persons belonging to the more favored classes of society, supply the place of many of these terms by others derived from the language of books. The old words thus discarded, which are often far more expressive and more consonant to the genius of the language than the apparently more elegant novelties by which they are supplanted, are from that time considered as the exclusive property of the common people, and receive the name of *provincial*, *colloquial*, or *vulgar*.

But notwithstanding all this, the common speech often enters largely into composition, and in some instances constitutes the chief excellence of a writer. In dramatic composition the colloquial language predominates. In Shakespeare we find every variety of diction of which the English language is susceptible, from the loftiest flights of the statesman and philosopher to the familiar language of the lowest of the people. In Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Shirley, and the other dramatic authors, we find the familiar idiom to be the most prevalent.

If we examine the literature of other countries, we shall find that the colloquial tongue has been employed in written compositions of a similar kind and with equal success. In addition to Aristophanes and Plautus among the ancients, Cervantes may be mentioned as an example in Spain, and the writings of Rabelais and Molière in France. The colloquial dialect is generally more ancient than the literary language; as the latter is constantly changing, while the former remains nearly stationary.

If any person will take the trouble to examine the early dictionaries of the English language, or the dictionaries of which English forms a part, he will be surprised at the large number of words which have become so completely obsolete as to be undeserving a place in modern compilations. Even the English dictionary of Bailey, which, at the time Dr. Johnson published his, was the standard, abounds in words which are now never used in composition. This class of words was employed by authors from Chaucer's time, or about the year 1400, to the beginning of the seventeenth century. By the middle of that century they had ceased to be used in books, but were preserved in dictionaries for a century longer. The great mass of

them, however, are found in one or more of the numerous provincial dialects of England to the present day.

The dialects of the English language now spoken in England have existed from a very early period. It is not pretended by writers on the subject that any are of recent origin. "In early times," says Dr. Bosworth, "there was clearly a considerable dialectic variety in the writings of men residing in different provinces. The differences observable in the language of the most cultivated classes would be still more marked and apparent in the mass of population, or the less educated community. These, from their agricultural pursuits, had little communication with the inhabitants of other provinces; and having few opportunities and little inducement to leave their own neighborhood, they intermarried among each other, and, from their limited acquaintance and circumscribed views, they would naturally be much attached to their old manners, customs, and language. The same cause operating from age to age would keep united the greater part of the population, or the families of the middle stations of life; it may, therefore, be well expected that much of the peculiarity of dialect prevalent in Anglo-Saxon times, is preserved even to the present day in the provincial dialects of the same districts. In these local dialects, then, remnants of the Anglo-Saxon tongue may be found in the least altered, most uncorrupted, and therefore its purest state." \*

In an ethnological point of view the English dialects afford important materials for elucidating that portion of English history which relates to the early colonization of Great Britain; for, if history were silent on the subject, a philological test applied to the dialects of the country would show what nations contributed to its colonization.

The Edinburgh Review for April, 1844, in an article on the Provincialisms of the European Languages, gives the following results of an inquiry into the number of provincial words which had then been arrested by local glossaries:

|                                      |       |                             |              |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Shropshire, . . . . .                | 1,993 | Sussex, . . . . .           | 371          |
| { Devonshire and Cornwall, . . . . . | 878   | Essex, . . . . .            | 589          |
| { Devonshire (North), . . . . .      | 1,146 | Wiltshire, . . . . .        | 592          |
| { Exmoor, . . . . .                  | 370   | { Hallamshire, . . . . .    | 1,568        |
| Herefordshire, . . . . .             | 822   | { Craven, . . . . .         | 6,169        |
| Lancashire, . . . . .                | 1,922 | North County, . . . . .     | 3,750        |
| Suffolk, . . . . .                   | 2,400 | Cheshire, . . . . .         | 903          |
| Norfolk, . . . . .                   | 2,500 | Grose and Pegge,† . . . . . | 3,500        |
| Somersetshire, . . . . .             | 1,204 |                             |              |
|                                      |       |                             | <hr/> 30,687 |

\* Preface to Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, p. xxvi.

† Set down as Metropolitan.

"Admitting that several of the foregoing are synonymous, superfluous, or common to each county, there are nevertheless many of them which, although alike orthographically, are vastly dissimilar in signification. Making these allowances, they amount to a little more than 20,000; or, according to the number of English counties hitherto illustrated, to the average ratio of 1478 to a county. Calculating the twenty-six unpublished in the same ratio (for there are supposed to be as many words collected by persons who have never published them), they will furnish 36,428 additional provincialisms, forming in the aggregate 59,000 words in the colloquial tongue of the lower classes, which can, for the chief part, produce proofs of legitimate origin."

Since the above was written, a most important contribution to this department of literature has been made in the publication of "A Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words, Obsolete Phrases, Proverbs, and Ancient Customs, from the fourteenth century. By J. O. Halliwell. 2 vols. 8vo, London, 1847." This admirable work actually contains 50,000 words, a great portion of which are illustrated by extracts from manuscripts. It will be found by most persons to amply supply the place of the numerous separate glossaries for studying the dialects of England, while it affords indispensable assistance for the correct understanding of the early writers. A still later publication of the same description, and which has constantly been consulted with advantage in preparing the second edition of the present work, is the "Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English, containing words from the English writers previous to the nineteenth century, which are no longer in use, or are not used in the same sense, and words which are now used only in the provincial dialects. Compiled by Thomas Wright, Esq. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1857."

As it does not fall within the scope of these inquiries to discuss the languages to which the English bears a relationship, we shall pass over these, and come at once to the Anglo-Saxon. This forms the basis of the English language, and is to be considered as the *mother-tongue*, upon which many words and phrases from other languages, at successive periods, during a space of fourteen centuries, have been engrafted.

The Saxons brought their language into Britain in the year 449, when the invasion under Hengist took place. What the language was at this period it is impossible to show, as no writings of the time have come down to us. It probably approached nearer to its immediate progenitor, the Low German and Mæso-Gothic, than the form it assumed several centuries later, when we first find written documents.\*

\* It is true that the celebrated Anglo-Saxon poem of Beowulf is considered to be contemporary with Hengist. But its editor, Mr. Kemble, states that the poem as contained

The large number of invaders who followed Hengist compelled the ancient inhabitants to retire; and in about a century the whole country was formed into a Saxon kingdom, wherein their language took the place of the Celtic. This language, thus introduced and so firmly established, has been called *pure Saxon* by the learned Dr. Hickes in his "*Thesaurus Veterum Linguarum Septentrionalium*."

The languages of the Angles and Saxons were closely allied to each other. In fact, from a comparison of the earliest specimens that have come down to us, it is evident that they were merely dialects of the same tongue, spoken by people living contiguous to each other. The other Gothic invaders, or colonists of Britain, who have left traces of their language, are the Jutes of Jutland and the Friesians of Friesland.

The Danes made their first descent on the English coast in 787, and were soon repelled. Successive invasions followed, and when Charlemagne compelled them to retreat before his victorious armies, they sought a refuge in Britain, laying waste the country and plundering wherever they came. The Saxons always got rid of them as soon as possible, either by force of arms or contributions of money. Yet in many instances they established colonies, and after 230 years of warfare they succeeded in raising a Danish king to the throne of England in the year 1017. His reign, however, was short; for in twenty-four years the Danish dynasty was extinct, and a Saxon king again succeeded.

This is the period where Dr. Hickes places the second stage of the Anglo-Saxon language, being that in which it was affected by the Danish invasions, receiving new words or dialectical changes. Mr. Forby, in his remarks on the dialect of East Anglia, says that no part of England was more completely overrun or longer occupied than this; but he denies that a number of words sufficiently large was imported to give a new color and character to the Saxon tongue.\*

"The French element appeared in our language with the battle of Hastings (A. D. 1066), perhaps in a slight degree during the reign of Edward the Confessor."† It is the dialect spoken in the northern parts of France, and denominated Norman French, which has had the greatest influence upon the English language.

Those parts of Great Britain which have contributed most to our provincialisms are the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the Scottish Borders. It was chiefly from these counties that New England was colonized; hence their peculiarities of language are most numerous in the New Eng-

in the Cottonian MS., British Museum, is not so old; and there occur in it Christian allusions which fix this text at least at a period subsequent to A. D. 597.

\* Forby's *Introd. to the Vocab. of East Anglia*, p. 31.

† Latham on the *English Language*, p. 45. 1st edit.

land States. The provincialisms used in the districts referred to have been collected and published in Forby's *Vocabulary of East Anglia*, 2 vols. 12mo. London, 1830; Moor's *Suffolk Words and Phrases*, 12mo. London, 1823; Brockett's *Glossary of North Country Words*, with their etymology, 3d edition, 2 vols. 12mo. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1846; and Carr's dialect of Craven in the West Riding of York, 2 vols. 12mo. 2d edition, London, 1828.

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### AMERICAN DIALECTS.

DIALECTS originate in various ways. First, by the proximity of nations speaking different languages, in which case many words and phrases are borrowed from one into the other; witness the Scotch and Irish dialects of the English. Secondly, by migrations. This is the most fruitful and permanent source of dialects. We see its effects in the language of England; for the immigrations of various nations into Great Britain from the Saxons down to the period of the Norman conquest are yet distinctly marked in the dialects of that country.

In the United States it is easy to point out causes, which, in the course of a few generations, will materially affect the English language in the particular districts of country where those influences are at work. Dialects will spring up as marked as those of Great Britain. A free intercourse may in some cases check the permanency of these dialects; but in those parts of the country aside from the great thoroughfares, where a dialect has once become firmly established, a thousand years will not suffice to eradicate it.

The State of New York was originally settled by the Dutch. The number of their colonists was never large, nor did they extend their settlements beyond the valley of the Mohawk and lands adjacent; yet we find even in this thickly settled State, after a lapse of two hundred years, that they have left evident traces on our spoken language. In the cities of New York and Albany many Dutch words have become incorporated into the common speech. In some of the inland villages of Dutch origin, the inhabitants still use the language of their fathers; and there are even individuals who never spoke any other.

The words so adopted by us embrace geographical names, — a class of words which the first colonists of a country or the primitive inhabitants themselves generally leave to their posterity or to the subsequent occupants. Many of the other words which the Dutch have left us are terms belonging to the kitchen. These have been preserved and handed down by cooks and domestic servants, until from constant use they are become familiar to



all. Among these terms are *cookey*, *cruller*, *olykoke*, *spack* and *applejees*, *noodlejees*, *rullichies*, *koolslaa*, *pit*.

The terms for various playthings, holidays, etc., preserve among children their original Dutch names; as *scup*, *snore*, *hoople*, *pee wee*, *pile*, *pinkster*, *paas*. Other words confined to children are *pinky*, *terawchy*.

Articles of wearing apparel in some instances retain their Dutch names; as *barracade*, *clockmutch*.

Besides these there are terms, the use of which is not confined to the districts originally colonized from Holland, but has been extended to New England and several of the Northern States, and even to Canada; such as *stoop*, a porch, *boss*, a master-workman, etc.

If a few Dutch colonists mingled with the English have been able to engraft so many words on our language, what may we not expect from the hundreds of thousands of Germans in the State of Pennsylvania? There the German language will doubtless exist for centuries; for, although they are situated in the midst of an English-speaking population far more numerous than themselves, and although the government and laws are conducted through the English language, still the tendency of a people of common origin to cling together,—the publication of newspapers, almanacs, and books in German,—and the cultivation to some extent of German literature, will tend to preserve the idiom and nationality of the people. It is true the language is already much corrupted, and in the course of time it must give way to the English; but it will leave behind it an almost imperishable dialect as a memento of its existence. In the States of Ohio and Texas, where there are large settlements of Germans, a similar result must follow.

In the State of Illinois is a colony of Norwegians. These people before coming to America sent out an agent, who selected and purchased for them a large tract of land in one section of that State. They were accompanied by their clergyman and schoolmaster. They are thus kept together, and will for a long time preserve their language and nationality. But it must also eventually give way, after engrafting on the English language in that vicinity a Norwegian dialect.

There are large settlements of Welsh emigrants in the States of Pennsylvania and New York. In the latter, in Oneida county, one may travel for miles and hear nothing but the Welsh language. These people have their newspapers and magazines in their native tongue, and support many churches wherein their language alone is preached. The Welsh, however, are not in sufficient numbers, nor are they sufficiently isolated, to retain for any length of time their native form of speech; neither can they produce any sensible dialectical change in our language, owing to the great difference between it and their own. They will, however, add some words to it.

In the State of Louisiana, which was colonized by the French, and in Florida, which was colonized by the Spaniards, there are many words of foreign origin, scarcely known in the Northern States. The geographical divisions, the names of rivers, mountains, bays; the peculiarities of soil and climate; all that relates to the cultivation of the earth, the names of fishes, birds, fruits, vegetables, coins, etc., etc., retain to a great extent the names given them by the first possessors of the country. The same classes of words are preserved in Lower Canada, where they were originally given by the French. We have adopted them into our own tongue, where they will forever remain in use. Among the words of French origin are *bagasse, banquette, cache, bodette, bayou, saut, levee, crevasse, habitan, portage, voyageur*.

The Spanish colonists in Florida, and our intercourse with Mexico and the Spanish main, were the means of introducing a few Spanish words. Since the annexation of Texas, New Mexico, and California, our vocabulary has received numerous additions from this source. These consist of geographical terms; as, *arroyo, acequia, barranca, canyon, cienega, cieneguita, faralones, loma, mesa, mesilla, playa, ojo, sierra, jornada*; of names of articles of food, as *tortilla, frijoles, atole, pinole, chile*; and of various other terms, as, *arriero, adobe, chaparal, pistareen, rancho, ranchero, lariat, lasso, fundango, stampede, serape, vamos*.

The Indian terms in our language, as might be supposed, are numerous. First, as to geographical names. These abound in every State in the Union, though more in some States than in others. In New England, particularly on the coast, Indian names are very common. Nearly all the rivers, bays, and prominent landmarks bear them, as *Housatonic, Connecticut, Quinnebaug, Pawcatuck, Merrimack, Kennebec, Penobscot, Narraganset, Passamaquoddy*, etc. In other parts of the country, too, the rivers retain their aboriginal names, as the *Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Susquehanna, Roanoke, Altamaha, Chattahoochie, Alabama*, etc., etc. And the same may be said of the great lakes; as, *Ontario, Erie, Huron, Michigan*, as well as the lesser ones of *Seneca, Cayuga, Canandaigua, Oneida, Winnipeg, Winnebago*; and also of nearly all the bays, mountains, and numerous geographical divisions and localities. Many of the aboriginal names, however, have been discarded for others less appropriate. In New England the towns and villages were chiefly named after the towns in England from which the early colonists emigrated. In the State of New York there is a strange discrepancy in the names of places. Before the Revolution the people seemed to prefer the aboriginal names; not only the rivers, lakes, hills, etc., but many of the towns, received them. After the war, the names of distinguished statesmen and soldiers were applied to the new counties and towns. Besides geographical names, the Indian languages have supplied us with 1st, Many names of beasts and fishes, as *caribou, cayman, chipmuk,*

*moose, ocelot, opossum, raccoon, skunk, manatee, squeteague, menhaden, pauhaugen, scuppaug, quahaug.* 2d, Of plants; as, *persimmon, chinapin, pecan, tuckahoe, maize, kinnikinnik, tobacco*; particularly preparations of them for food, as *samp, hominy, succotash, supawm* from Indian corn; and from the cassava plant, *mandioca* and *tapioca*. 3d, Names of articles known to and used by the Indians, and which the Europeans did not possess; as, *canoe, hammock, moccasin, wampum, wigwam, tomahawk, pemmican*; and 4th, names applied by Indians to themselves in their various relations; as, *inca, cazique, cockarouse, mingo, sachem, sagamore, squaw, pappoos*.

The greatest perversions of the English language arise from two opposite causes. One of them is the introduction of vulgarisms by uneducated people, who not having the command of proper words to express their ideas, invent others for the purpose. These words continue among this class, are transmitted by them to their children, and thus become permanent and provincial. They are next seized upon by stump-speakers at political meetings, because they are popular with the masses. Next we hear them on the floor of Congress and in our halls of legislation. Quoted by the newspapers, they become familiar to all, and take their place in the colloquial language of the whole people. Lexicographers now secure them and give them a place in their dictionaries; and thus they are firmly engrafted on our language. The study of lexicography will show that this process has long been going on in England, and doubtless other languages are subject to similar influences.

But the greatest injury to our language arises from the perversion of legitimate words and the invention of hybrid and other inadmissible expressions by educated men, and particularly by the clergy. This class is the one, above all others, which ought to be the conservators rather than the perverters of language. It is nevertheless a fact which cannot be denied, that many strange and barbarous words to which our ears are gradually becoming familiar, owe to them their origin and introduction; among them may be mentioned such verbs as to *fellowship*, to *difficult*, to *eventuate*, to *doxologize*, to *happify*, to *donate*, to *funeralize*, etc., etc.

Political writers have made, and are constantly making large additions to our stock of words and phrases. Alex. Hamilton's writings abound in newly coined expressions; many of which have been adopted by Dr. Webster, and have a place in his dictionary. But few, however, have come into general use, as his writings have not been widely diffused, and there is nothing to recommend them for adoption by scholars. Mr. N. P. Willis, also, has the reputation of inventing many new words, some of which, though not yet embodied in our dictionaries, are much used in familiar language. Judge Story has contributed his share of new words; but as they

are confined to legal treatises and works on the Constitution, they can never seriously affect the language.

Writers of political articles in the newspapers, stump-orators, and the members of legislative bodies, have added much to the English vocabulary. This class of words, though not remarkable for their elegance, are often highly expressive, and become more widely known than other classes. In many instances, however, their existence is but short. They often spring up with a party; and as the parties become extinct, or give place to new ones, the terms which express their peculiar ideas or doctrines likewise fall out of use. In this class may be included such terms as *Old Hunker*, *Bucktail*, *Federalist*, *Barnburner*, *Loco-foco*, *Young Democracy*, *Democratic Republican*, *Know-nothing*, *Native American*, *Nullifier*, *Nullification*, *Coon*, *Coonery*, *Fire-eater*, *Black Republican*, *Silver-gray*, *Wire-puller*, etc.

There are words, however, in this class, which, having grown out of our peculiar institutions, are of a permanent nature. The origin of some of these is involved in obscurity, while that of others is well known. Sometimes a little incident trivial in itself has brought into existence words which are extremely expressive, and which will remain as long as our institutions exist. In this class we find *caucus*, *mass-meeting*, *buncombe* or *bunkum*, to *lobby*, *mileage*, *gubernatorial*, *senatorial*, *squatter sovereignty*, *stamping ground*, *stump*, etc.

The peculiar physical features of the country — its animals, productions, aborigines, forest-life, etc. — have been a most fruitful source, from which have sprung perhaps the largest number of new words, as necessary and useful to ourselves as any derived from our Saxon ancestors. These terms are not used in England, for the simple reason that there they are not wanted. Although I cannot agree with Dr. Webster, that "we rarely find a new word introduced into a language which is entirely useless," — for there are unquestionably thousands of words encumbering our dictionaries which might well be dispensed with; yet there is no doubt that, in most instances, "the use of new terms is dictated by necessity or utility; sometimes to express shades of difference in signification, for which the language did not supply a suitable term; sometimes to express a combination of ideas by a single word, which otherwise would require a circumlocution. These benefits, which are often perceived, as it were, instinctively by a nation, recommend such words to common use, till the cavils of critics are silenced by the weight of authority." — *Letter to J. Pickering*, p. 7.

Were we to classify the periods when names were applied to places in the State of New York, for example, we would call that in which the Indian names were applied, the *aboriginal* period. This is as far back as it

would be safe for ordinary mortals to go, leaving the "*antediluvian*" period to the second sight of such seers as Mr. Rafinesque.\*

The Indian names seem to have prevailed till the Revolution. Then came a burst of patriotism among the settlers, many of whom doubtless had served in the war, and every new place was christened with the names of the warriors and statesmen of the day. Thus arose *Washington county*, *Washington village*, and *Washington hollow*; *Jefferson county*, *village*, *lake*, etc. The State of New York has thus perpetuated, in her towns and villages, the names of *Adams*, *Jay*, *Lafayette*, *Hamilton*, *Madison*, *Pinckney*, *Putnam*, *Pulaski*, *Schuyler*, *De Kalb*, *Steuben*, *Sullivan*, *Gates*, *Wayne*, etc. This may well be styled the *patriotic* period. The names of statesmen and generals, however, did not suffice for the patriotism of our early pioneers, for we find interspersed among them the names of *Freedom*, *Freetown*, *Freeport*, *Independence*, *Liberty*, *Victory*, *Hopewell*, *Harmony*, *Concord*, *Union*, etc.

Next comes the *classical* period; for by what other term could we designate a period when towns were christened by the names of such men as *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Solon*, *Ovid*, *Cato*, *Euclid*, *Brutus*, *Pompey*, *Tully*, *Cicero*, *Aurelius*, *Scipio*, *Ulysses*, *Seneca*, *Hannibal*, *Hector*, *Romulus*, *Lysander*, *Manlius*, *Camillus*, and *Marcellus*; or of such places as *Athens*, *Sparta*, *Marathon*, *Troy*, *Corinth*, *Pharsalia*, *Pulmyra*, *Utica*, *Smyrna*, *Rome*, and *Carthage*.

Testimony to the piety (to say nothing of the good taste) of our forefathers is also afforded by the occurrence of such names as *Eden*, *Babylon*, *Sodom*, *Jerusalem*, *Jericho*, *Hebron*, *Goshen*, *Bethany*, *Bethpage*, *Bethlehem*, *Sharon*, etc. There are towns named after nearly every country in Europe, as *Norway*, *Sweden*, *Denmark* (with a *Copenhagen* adjoining), *Russia*, *Greece*, *Italy*, *Sardinia*, *Holland*, *Wales*, as well as after their principal cities. There is a town of *Mexico*, *Ohili*, *Peru*, *Delhi*, *Canton*, *Cairo*, *Egypt*, *China*, *Cuba*. Distinguished men in English history, as *Milton*, *Addison*, *Clarendon*, *Dryden*, *Scott*, *Byron*, *Chesterfield*, *Hume*, *Marlborough*, *Junius*, have towns christened with their names. But little fondness is exhibited for dramatic authors, as the name of the greatest of them all has been forgotten: not even a pond, a hollow, or a swamp has been honored with the name of Shakspeare. If we were to classify all the names of places in the State of New York, we should be puzzled to find a place for the names of *Painted Post*, *Oxbow*, *Halfmoon*, *Owl Pond*, *Oyster Bay*, *Mud Creek*, *Cow Neck*, *Mosquito Cove*, *Oblong*, *Pitcher*, *Red Jacket*, *Rough and Ready*, *Success*, and the like. The name of *Penn Yan* is said to have been manufactured by the first settlers, part of whom were from Pennsylvania and the rest from New England, by taking the first syllable from "Pennsylvania," and the last from "Yankee."

\* See Introduction to History of Kentucky.

Strangely formed factitious words are much affected at the West, *abskize*, *absquatulate*, *catavampously*, *exflunctify*, *obscute*, *slantendicular*, etc. etc.; and in the South such onomatopoees as *keslosh*, *kesouse*, *keswollop*, *kewhol-lux*, etc.

The battle fields of the Mexican war are commemorated in eighteen *Buena Vistas*, sixteen *Montereyes*, nine *Pulo Altos*, and two *Resacas*. And the names of its heroes have given birth to a host of *Taylors* and *Taylorvilles*, *Worths* and *Worthvilles*, *Pierces* and *Piercevilles*, besides *Piercetown*, *Pierceland*, and *Pierce Point*; also several *Polks* and *Polkkrilles*, together with *Polktown*, *Polk City*, *Polk Putch*, *Polk Precinct*, and *Polk Run*; and two additional *Quitmans*. In California many places have been absurdly named from some trifling incident connected with the first settlement; such as *Hangtown*, *Fiddletown*, *Shirt-Tail Canyon*, *Whiskey Gulch*, *Port Wine Diggings*, *Humbug Flat*, *Murderer's Bar*, *Flapjack Canyon*, *Yankee Jim's*, *Juckass Gulch*, *Red Dog*, *Traveller's Rest*, *Fair Play*, with many others equally ridiculous.

In consequence of the variety of origin of the names of States and towns, the formation of nouns from them to denote the native or citizen of such State or town is sometimes difficult and even impossible. Thus *New Yorker*, *Vermonter*, *Rhode Islander*, will do well enough; and so will *Virginian*, *Georgian*, *Philadelphian*, *Bostonian*, *Mobilian*; but *Buffalonian*, *Illinoian*, *Ohioan*, are hardly admissible; while *Connecticut*, *Massachusetts*, and *Arkansas* refuse to yield to the process at all.

The class of new words and new meanings of old words which owe their origin to circumstances or productions peculiar to the United States, such as *ark*, *backwoods*, *backwoodsmen*, *breudstuffs*, *barrens*, *blaze*, *bottoms*, *broadhorn*, *buffalo-robe*, *cane-brake*, *cypress-brake*, *clearing*, *corn broom*, *corn-shucking*, *deadening*, *diggings*, *dug-out*, *flat-boat*, *hog-wallow*, *husking*, *interval*, *location*, *pine-barrens*, *prairie*, *preëmption*, *reservation*, *salt lick*, *savannah*, *snag*, *sawyer*, *squatter*, etc., are necessary additions to the language.

The metaphorical and other odd expressions used first at the West, and afterwards in other parts of the country, often originate in some curious anecdote or event, which is transmitted from mouth to mouth, and soon made the property of all. Political writers and stunp speakers perform a prominent part in the invention and diffusion of these phrases. Among these may be mentioned, *to cave in*, *to acknowledge the corn*, *to flash in the pan*, *to bark up the wrong tree*, *to wake up the wrong passenger*, *to pull up stakes*, *to be a caution*, *to fizzle out*, *to flat out*, *to fix his flint*, *to be among the missing*, *to give him Jessy*, *to see the elephant*, *to fly around*, *to spread oneself*, *to tucker out*, *to use up*, *to walk into*, *to cotton*, *to hifer*, *to chisel*, *to slope*, *to lobby*, *to gerrymander*, *to splurge*, etc. etc.

Our people, particularly those who belong to the West and South, are

fond of using intensive and extravagant epithets, both as adjectives and adverbs, as *awful, powerful, monstrous, dreadful, mighty, almighty, all-fired*, etc.; while euphemistic oaths are one of the characteristics of the Yankee dialect.

The words *bankable, boatable, dutiable, mailable, mileage*, are well formed and useful terms, which have been generally adopted by those who have occasion to make use of them. But the words *dubersome, disremember, decedent, docity*, and the like, can hardly be called necessary additions to our language.

There is a diversity in the pronunciation of certain words in different parts of the United States, which is so perceptible that a native of these particular districts may be at once recognized by a person who is observant in these matters. Residents of the city of New York are perhaps less marked in their pronunciation and use of words than the residents of any other city or State, the reason of which is obvious. The population is so fluctuating, so many people from every part of the country, as well as from England, Scotland, and Ireland, are congregated there, who are in daily contact with each other, that there is less chance for any idiom or peculiarity of speech to grow up. Nevertheless, grammatical inaccuracies are far from uncommon in the speech of the wealthier classes, and slang is cultivated to an increasing extent by the "rowdy" portion of the population.

The large number of educated men in New England, her admirable schools and higher institutions of education, have had a powerful influence in moulding the language of her people. Yet, notwithstanding this fact, in Boston and other towns in Massachusetts, there exist some glaring errors in the vulgar speech. There are peculiarities also to be observed in the literary language of the Bostonians. The great extent to which the scholars of New England have carried the study of the German language and literature for some years back, added to a very general neglect of the old masterpieces of English composition, have had the effect of giving to the writings of many of them an artificial, unidiomatic character, which has an inexpressibly unpleasant effect to those who are not habituated to it.

The agricultural population who live in the interior of New England have a strongly marked provincial dialect, by which they may be distinguished from the people of every other part of the Union. The chief peculiarity is a drawling pronunciation, sometimes accompanied by a speaking through the nose, as *eend* for *end*, *dawg* for *dog*, *Gawd* for *God*, etc. Before the sounds *ow* and *oo*, they often insert a short *i*, which we will represent by the letter *y*; as *kyow* for *cow*, *vyow* for *vow*, *tyoo* for *too*, *dyoo* for *do*, etc. etc. The numerous words employed in New England which are not heard in other parts of the country, are mostly genuine old words

still provincial in the North of England; very few are of indigenous origin.

Among some of the Western people there are strange ideas regarding the use of certain words, which has led the mock-modest to reject them and substitute others. Thus, to speak of the names of animals only, the essentially English word *bull* is refined beyond the mountains, and perhaps elsewhere, into *cow-creature*, *male-cow*, and even *gentleman-cow*! A friend who resided many years in the West has told me of an incident where a gray-headed man of sixty doffed his hat reverently and apologized to a clergyman for having used inadvertently in his hearing the plain Saxon term. *Male sheep*, *male hog*, etc., are of a piece with the preceding, to which we may add *rooster*, *he biddy*, *game chicken*, etc.

The chief peculiarity in the pronunciation of the Southern and Western people is the giving of a broader sound than is proper to certain vowels; as *whar* for *where*, *thar* for *there*, *bar* for *bear*. *Ear* and *here* are both pronounced like *year*; *house*, *about*, etc., have a pronunciation approaching to *hoose*, *aboot*, etc.; and the final *r* is omitted, as, *you*, *do*, for *your*, *door*, etc.

In the following table of words incorrectly pronounced, such as belong to New England are designated by the letters N. E.; those exclusively Western, by the letter W.; the Southern words, by S.; the rest are common to various parts of the Union. In this attempt at classification there are doubtless errors and imperfections; for an emigrant from Vermont to Illinois would introduce the provincialisms of his native district into his new residence. Many of these inaccuracies are also heard in Eng-

|            |                  |            |                   |
|------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|
| actilly    | for actually,    | caze       | for because,      |
| aim        | " carn,          | chser      | " chair,          |
| airy       | " aren,          | chimbly    | " chimney,        |
| allers     | " always, S. W.  | chist      | " chest, N. E.    |
| arethmetic | " arithmetic,    | clar       | " clear, W.       |
| arrant     | " errand,        | close      | " close,          |
| arter      | " after,         | considable | " considerable,   |
| ary        | " e'er a,        | cotch'd    | " caught, W.      |
| attackted  | " attack'd,      | critter    | " creature,       |
| anywhores  | " anywhere,      | cunmle     | " colonel,        |
| bachelder  | " bachelor,      | curous     | " curious,        |
| bar        | " hear, W.       | cupalo     | " cupola,         |
| becase     | " because,       | curchy     | " curtesy,        |
| bellowses  | " bellows,       | cuss       | " curse,          |
| ben        | " been, N. E.    | dar        | " dare, W.        |
| bile       | " boil,          | darter     | " daughter,       |
| bimoby     | " by and by,     | deef       | " deaf,           |
| bust       | " burst,         | dew        | " do, N. E.       |
| caired     | " carried, N. E. | deestric   | " district, N. E. |



|             |                      |              |                    |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| desput      | for desperate, N. E. | mash         | for marsh,         |
| dooz        | " does, N. E.        | million      | " melon,           |
| drap        | " drop, S.           | mischievious | " mischievious,    |
| dreffle     | " dreadful, N. E.    | mountainous  | " mountainous,     |
| dribble     | " driblet,           | naamk        | " nothing, L. I.   |
| drowned     | " drown'd,           | nay          | " ne'er a,         |
| druv        | " drove,             | nigger       | " negro,           |
| dubous      | " dubious,           | often        | " often,           |
| eend        | " end,               | ole          | " old,             |
| everywheres | " everywhere,        | only         | " only, S.         |
| forrerd     | " forward, N. E.     | pint         | " point,           |
| fust        | " first,             | pooty        | " pretty,          |
| gal         | " girl,              | punkin       | " pumpkin,         |
| gin         | " given,             | pus          | " purse, N. E.     |
| gineral     | " general,           | racket       | " rocket,          |
| git         | " get,               | rale         | " real,            |
| gownd       | " gown,              | rayther      | " rather,          |
| grievous    | " grievous,          | rench        | " rinse,           |
| gwino       | " going, S.          | rheumatiz    | " rheumatism,      |
| har         | " hair, W.           | ruff         | " roof, N. E.      |
| hath        | " hearth, S.         | sarce        | " sauce,           |
| hankecher   | " handkerchief,      | sarcer       | " saucer,          |
| hender      | " hinder,            | sarve        | " serve,           |
| hist        | " hoist,             | sartin       | " certain, N. E.   |
| holt        | " hold,              | sass         | " sauce, N. E.     |
| huff        | " hoof,              | sassy        | " saucy,           |
| hull        | " whole, N. E.       | scass        | " scarce, W.       |
| hum         | " home, N. E.        | schollard    | " scholar, S. W.   |
| humbly      | " homely, N. E.      | sen          | " since,           |
| idea        | " idéa, S.           | shet         | " shut, S.         |
| ile         | " oil,               | shuk         | " shook, W.        |
| injine      | " engine,            | sich         | " such,            |
| innards     | " inwards,           | skeart       | " scared, S. W.    |
| intor       | " into,              | sorter       | " sort of,         |
| innemy      | " enemy,             | smaart       | " smart, S.        |
| janders     | " jaundice,          | spettacle    | " spectacle,       |
| jidge       | " judge, N. E.       | spile        | " spoil,           |
| jost        | " just,              | spose        | " suppose,         |
| jino        | " join,              | squinch      | " quench,          |
| jisto       | " joist,             | stan         | " stand,           |
| keer        | " care,              | star         | " stair, W.        |
| ketch       | " catch,             | steeple      | " staple, W.       |
| kin         | " can,               | stiddy       | " steady,          |
| kittle      | " kettle,            | stun         | " stone, N. E.     |
| kivor       | " cover,             | streech      | " stretch, W.      |
| larn        | " learn,             | stupenduous  | " stupendous,      |
| larnin      | " learning,          | sithin       | " something, N. E. |
| lawth       | " loath,             | tech         | " touch,           |
| leetle      | " little,            | tend         | " attend,          |
| lieves      | " lief,              | tell'd       | " told, N. E.      |

|             |                |         |                |
|-------------|----------------|---------|----------------|
| tew         | foi to, N. E.  | varmint | for vermin, W. |
| thar        | " there, W.    | wal     | " well, N. E.  |
| tole        | " told,        | whar    | " where, W.    |
| tossel      | " tassel,      | wünt    | " wont, N. E.  |
| tuck        | " took,        | wüinst  | " once, W.     |
| torectly    | " directly, S. | wüs     | " worse,       |
| tremenduous | " tremendous,  | yaller  | " yellow,      |
| twisto      | " twice,       | year    | " ear, S.      |
| umberell    | " umbrella,    | yero    | " here, S.     |
| valeation   | " valuation,   | yourn   | " yours.       |

Americanisms exhibit themselves, not in the use of peculiar words and pronunciations alone, but also in some points of grammar. Thus, to mention a few :

The termination *-ity* for abstract nouns is preferred in many cases to the English *-ness* ; so that we have, for instance, such words as *accountability*, instead of *accountableness* ; *obtusity*, for *obtuseness*, etc. Of a like nature are *rendition*, for *rendering* ; *reservation*, for *reserve*.

The terminations *-er* and *-est*, which indicate the degrees of comparison of adjectives, are often discarded for the adverbs *more* and *most*, even before monosyllables, contrary to good English usage. And the possessive relation is often denoted by the preposition *of*, where the termination *-s* would be neater and more idiomatic.

The influence of the French language seems to be visible, not only in the preceding instances, but also in the use of the definite article before the names of diseases ; as, *the* gout, *the* consumption, *the* headache, *the* erysipelas, etc.

It may be owing to the influence of the German language, in which the adverbs are nothing but apocopated adjectives, that the adjectival ending is so often omitted by vulgar speakers ; as, " I have got wet *bad* ; " " See that you do it *good* ; " " He 'll take cold *sure*."

On the other hand it seems owing to the teachings of some priggish pedagogue, who had learned that " adverbs qualify verbs," and knew nothing beyond it, that adverbs are now often employed where idiomatic usage requires an adjective ; as, " I feel very *badly* ; " " you look *charmingly*," etc. So that we may expect soon to hear, " She seems *ignorantly* ; " " He became quite *crazily*," etc. ; and to be unable any longer to make the distinction between " He feels *warmly*," and " he feels *warm*." The ladies seem more especially to affect this form of speech, which is more common at the South than at the North ; whence it is likely that it originated in a Southern boarding-school. The persons who use it are not aware that it is really the person or thing which is qualified in these cases, and not the action or state of being.

Among the American peculiarities of style one of the most remarkable is

a tendency to exaggeration. "The use of extravagant terms," says Dr. Lieber, in one of his letters to me on the subject, "is very common. These are often used by deficiently educated persons who edit newspapers, and more frequently by the same class of people when speaking in public. In the South and West this custom prevails to a greater extent than at the North. 'This is the finest cow in the State of South Carolina,' observes one. 'The handsomest woman south of the Potomac,' says another. And a man who kept a country school with ten small scholars was said to be making 'bushels of money' by it."

This sort of exaggeration frequently assumes the form of what in England is very appropriately termed "fine writing," but which with us is better known as "highfaluten." Thus a Western critic, speaking of the acting of a Miss Logan, says the way in which she chanted the Marseillaise was "terrible in its intensity," and that the impression made "must create for her a name that will never die." This, however, "does not begin" with Miss Wyatt, whose performances at Springfield, Illinois, are thus described in a criticism in one of the papers of that city:

"Illumined by the lyric muse, she is magnificent. All nerve, all palpitation, her rounded form is the fittest setting for her diamond soul! She has grace which is more than beauty, and distinction which adorns still more than grace. She appears the incarnation of genius!—it struggles within her!—inspiration quivers down her snow-white arms, and trembles on her fingers' ends,—passion wrestles in her quivering frame, and shudders through her limbs. Her soul flickers in every accent, and looms up in every pantomime, while serene smiles play about her mouth. Her drapery follows her gestures,—her gestures her passions. Every attitude is a model, every pose is a classic statue."

"The very opposite," says Dr. Lieber, "is the case at present in England. There has been no period and no country in which perspicuity, simplicity, and manliness of style are so general as at present in English Reviews; even newspapers, e. g. the London Spectator, are models of these attributes of a good style. Monkton Milnes, M. P., told me he had not the least doubt but that the House of Commons of the present day would not stand the eloquence of Fox, Sheridan, or Burke. I asked, 'What would they do?' 'The members would instantly leave their seats,' was the reply. Mr. Milnes also spoke of several American writers whose style was correct; still, he could always detect some florid expression characteristic of their people."

Before closing these observations on American provincialisms, I should do injustice to previous writers on the same subject, not to speak of their works. The earliest of these, as far as my knowledge extends, is that of Dr. Witherspoon. In a series of essays entitled "The Druid," which ap-

peared originally in a periodical publication in 1761, he devotes numbers 5, 6, and 7 of these essays, about twenty pages in all, to Americanisms, perversions of language in the United States, cant phrases, etc. They were afterwards published in his collected works, in 4 vols. 8vo., Philadelphia, 1801, and may be found in the fourth volume.

The most important work of the kind is that of the late Hon. John Pickering. He began with an article in the "Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," Boston. This was soon after enlarged and published in a separated volume entitled "*A Vocabulary, or Collection of Words and Phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to the United States of America. To which is prefixed an Essay on the present state of the English Language in the United States.*" Boston: 1816. pp. 206. (Containing about 520 words.) This valuable and interesting work received much attention, and in the following year appeared a pamphlet, entitled "*A Letter to the Hon. John Pickering, on the Subject of his Vocabulary, or Collection of Words and Phrases supposed to be peculiar to the United States.*" By Noah Webster. 8vo. Boston: 1817. pp. 69.

In the Transactions of the Albany Institute, 1830, Vol. I., is an article entitled "*Notes on Mr. Pickering's Vocabulary, etc., with Preliminary Observations.*" By T. Romeyn Beck. In Mr. Sherwood's "*Gazetteer of Georgia,*" is a glossary of words provincial in the Southern States. The latest work on provincialisms, but chiefly of errors in grammar, is "*A Grammatical Corrector, or Vocabulary of the Common Errors of Speech; alphabetically arranged, corrected, and explained for the Use of Schools and Private Individuals.*" By Seth T. Hurd. 12mo. Philadelphia: 1847.\*

Since the publication of the first edition of this work, there have been published two additions of a work entitled "*A Collection of College Words and Customs.*" By B. H. Hall. 12mo. Cambridge. The last edition in 1856. This is a very complete work in its way, and contains many Americanisms which originated at Colleges. The illustrations are excellent.

As the charge has been frequently made against us by English critics of perverting our vernacular tongue, and of adding useless words to it, it will not be out of place to state here that, in the belief of the author, the English

\* In preparing this work, I have examined all the English provincial glossaries, and the principal English dictionaries; which it was necessary to do in order to know what words and phrases were still provincial in England. Many of the facts in that portion of the Introduction which treats of English dialects, have been drawn from similar essays appended to the several glossaries. But I am chiefly indebted to the enlarged Preface to Dr. Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, which presents the best historical analysis extant of the English language; and to the admirable and later work of Professor Latham, "*The English Language,*" London, 1841, which is unquestionably the most valuable work on English philology and grammar which has yet appeared.

language is in no part of the world spoken in greater purity by the great mass of the people than in the United States. In making this assertion he does not depend wholly on his own observation; it has repeatedly been made by intelligent Englishmen who have travelled in the United States, and had an opportunity of judging. On this subject, the author of an English work, entitled the "Backwoods of Canada," has the following judicious remarks :

"With the exception of some few remarkable expressions, and an attempt at introducing fine words, the lower order of Yankees have a decided advantage over our English peasantry in the use of grammatical language; they speak better English than you will hear from persons of the same class in any part of England, Ireland, or Scotland; a fact that we should be unwilling to allow at home." — p. 88.

The Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, President of Princeton College, born and educated in Scotland, made a similar remark in 1784. In an essay on the language he says :

"The vulgar in America speak much better than the vulgar in Great Britain, for a very obvious reason, namely, that being much more unsettled, and moving frequently from place to place, they are not so liable to local peculiarities either in accent or phraseology." — *Works*, Vol. IV. p. 281.

The London Quarterly Review, in noticing Silliman's *Travels in England*, quotes his remark on the use of the English language in England and in America, wherein the Professor insists that it is "*more correctly spoken at this time (1805) by the mass of the Americans, than by the mass of the English nation.*" "This assertion," adds the reviewer, "is founded upon a common and very easy mistake as to the nature of provincial dialects, and upon a curious fact in the history of language. There are no provincial dialects in America; emigrants from all parts of Great Britain have met there, and intermixed with each other, and with natives of the country. The peculiarities of dialect have necessarily been melted down into the general speech, which is common English; and this is the language, therefore, which all children learn as their mother tongue. The low-bred Londoner does not transmit his vulgar shibboleth, and the child of the Northumbrian is free from the *burr* which sticks in the throat of his father. Dialects can only be preserved by collective bodies speaking the language which they acquired in their youth; they cannot therefore continue in promiscuous colonies." — Vol. 15, p. 61.

We cannot say as much, however, in favor of our literary dialect. The ripest scholars among us acknowledge the fact, that in the best authors and public speakers of Great Britain, there is a variety in the choice of expressions, a correctness in the use of the particles, and an idiomatic vigor and

raciness of style to which few or none of our writers can attain. The unfortunate tendency to favor the Latin at the expense of the Saxon element of our language, which social and educational causes have long tended to foster in the mother country, has with us received an additional impulse from the great admixture of foreigners in our population. It is not likely that the pure old idiomatic English style can ever be restored in this country; but there is no good reason to doubt, that the fusion of the present rather heterogeneous elements of which our society is composed, will result in the production of a style and a literature which will also have their beauties and merits, although fashioned after a somewhat different model.

# DICTIONARY

OF

## AMERICAN WORDS AND PHRASES.

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### A.

**A No. 1.** The highest classification of a vessel on Lloyd's list. Years ago it was common to see the mark appended to the name of a vessel in an advertisement for freight or passengers. So far the term and its use are English; but in a commercial country, the use of such terms is often extended beyond their original application.

It is well known to those who are in turn well known to Stewart, and who stand on his books rated *A No. 1* for the length of their bills, that the fitting out a young lady nowadays for a winter season in town, or a summer season at a watering-place, assimilates more nearly to preparing a vessel for a voyage around the world than any other analogous undertaking — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

The Niagara, New Orleans, and Louisville packet is one of the most magnificent steamers now running the river. Her interior arrangements are complete, and her officers *A No. 1*. — *Western Paper*.

Got a prime nigger, said the slave-dealer; an *A number one* cook and no mistake! picked her up cheap. — *Mrs. Stowe, Died*, Vol. I p. 313.

**ABERGOIN.** The term "aborigines" is corrupted by some of the illiterate people of the West into *Abergoins* or *Abrogans*.

**ABISSELF.** *A*, by itself, *A*. It will be recollected by many, that in the olden time the first letter of the alphabet was denominated "abisselfa" when it formed a syllable by itself, as in the word *able*. The scholar, in spelling the word, was taught to say, "*a*, by itself, *a*, (rapidly, *abisselfa*), *b*, *l*, *e*, *ble*, *able*." We derive this word and the use of it from England, where it is used in Suffolk county. See Moor's Glossary.

**TO ABOLITIONIZE.** To convert to the doctrines of the abolitionists.

**ABOUT RIGHT.** To do a thing *about right* is to do it well.

I fell foul of the old mare; and if I didn't give it to her *about right*, then there's none o' me, that's all. — *New England Stories*

**ABOVE PAR.** A term originally applied to stocks, but often transferred to other things which are superior; as, "this horse is above par;" "these goods are above par;" meaning that they are above the ordinary standard, better than common.

**ABOVE ONE'S BEND.** Out of one's power. A common expression in the Western States. *Above one's huckleberry* is a vulgarism of the same signification.

I shall not attempt to describe the curiosities at Peale's Museum; it is *above my bend*. — *Crockett, Tour Down East*.

**TO ABSQUATULATE.** To run away, to abscond. A factitious vulgarism.

W— was surrendered by his bail, who was security for his appearance at court fearing he was about to *absquatulate*. — *N. Y. Herald*, 1847.

A railroad station-master at Oakdale has *absquatulated* with funds belonging to the railroad and various individuals — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Hope's brightest visions *absquatulate* with their golden promises before the least cloud of disappointment, and leave not a shinplaster behind. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 309.

**ACCORDING TO GUNTER.** Gunter was a distinguished arithmetician, and the inventor of a chain and scale for measuring. The Laws of Rhode Island, both colonial and recent, referring to measures, say, "All casks shall be gauged by the rule commonly called 'gauging by Gunter.'" Hence any thing correctly and properly done is said to be "according to Gunter."

Mr. K—, a respected citizen of Detroit, has published a letter entirely exonerating General Cass from the charge of having defrauded his association in the land speculations. He is positive that all was done *according to Gunter*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**ACCOUNT.** "These hogs are of *no account*," meaning of no value. The word is used in the West to the exclusion of other shades of meaning. See *No Account*.

**ACCOUNTABILITY.** The state of being accountable. In England, the form *accountableness* is used. The same difference is observable in a number of words.

**ACEQUIA.** (Span.) The irrigating ditches used in Texas and New Mexico are called *Acequias*; the larger or principal one, which supplies the smaller, is called the *Acequia Madre*, or main ditch. The word is sometimes spelt *azequia* or *zequia*.

As the mustang sprang over the *zequia*, the flowing skirt of the manga was puffed forward. — *Mayne Reid, The War Trail*.



**ACKNOWLEDGE THE CORN.** An expression of recent origin, which has now become very common. It means to confess or acknowledge a charge or imputation. The following story is told as the origin of the phrase :

Some years ago, a raw customer, from the upper country, determined to try his fortune at New Orleans. Accordingly he provided himself with two flat-boats, — one laden with corn and the other with potatoes, — and down the river he went. The night after his arrival he went up town, to a gambling-house. Of course he commenced betting, and, his luck proving unfortunate, he lost. When his money was gone, he bet his "truck ;" and the corn and potatoes followed the money. At last, when completely cleaned out, he returned to his boats at the wharf ; when the evidences of a new misfortune presented themselves. Through some accident or other, the flat-boat containing the corn was sunk, and a total loss. Consoling himself as well as he could, he went to sleep, dreaming of gamblers, potatoes, and corn. It was scarcely sunrise, however, when he was disturbed by the "child of chance," who had arrived to take possession of the two boats as his winnings. Slowly awakening from his sleep, our hero, rubbing his eyes and looking the man in the face, replied : "Stranger, *I acknowledge the corn* — take 'em ; but the potatoes you can't have, by thunder !" — *Pittsburgh Com. Advertiser*.

The Evening Mirror very naively comes out and *acknowledges the corn*, admits that a demand was made, etc. — *New York Herald*, June 27, 1846.

Enough, said the Captain. I'm hoaxed, I'm gloriously hoaxed. *I acknowledge the corn*. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 80.

None of my enterprises, however, have been omitted, and, though a portion of my "Confessions" may by some be considered injudicious, I prefer frankly to *acknowledge the corn*, wherever I have had a hand in plucking it. — *P. T. Barnum*.

**ACROSS LOTS.** By short cuts, in the quickest manner.

I swore in Nauvoo, when my enemies were looking me in the face, that I would send them to hell *across lots* if they meddled with me. — *Speech of Brigham Young*, 1857.

**ACTION.** An amusing article appeared in the National Intelligencer, Washington, in 1846, on the abuse of this word. The writer says : —

"The *proceedings* of Congress ; the *decision* of Congress ; or either House ; the *vote* of the Senate or of the House, preliminary or final ; the *consideration* of a bill or measure ; the *signature* of the President after a bill has passed both Houses ; or the *sanction* or *approval* of the President — these are modes of expression no longer known. The words I underscore have disappeared — gone for ever, it would seem. Nobody hears of them more. It is the *action* of the House, or the House taking *action* ; the *action* of the Senate, or the Senate taking *action* ; or what *action* will the House take, or what *action* will the Senate take ; or both Houses are waiting for the *action* of the President."

**ADAM AND EVE.** (*Aplectum hyemale*.) Putty root, so called from the bulb of the preceding year being always connected with the new one.

**TO ADMIRE.** 1. To wonder at ; to be affected with slight surprise. — *Ray*.

In New England, particularly in Maine, the word is used in this sense. Some of the old English writers so employed it.

I perceive these lords  
At this rencontre do so much *admire*,  
That they devour their reason. — *Shakspeare*.

2. To like very much. This verb is often and very absurdly used in New England in such expressions as, "I should *admire* to see the President."

**ADOBIES.** (Span. *adobes*.) Sun-baked brick used for building houses, fortifications, and making inclosures, in Texas, New Mexico, etc.

The large and economical *adobe* brick, hardened in the sun and without fire, supercedes other materials for walls and fences in this dry atmosphere [that of the great Plains], and, as in Syria and Egypt, resists decay for centuries. — *W. Gilpin* in *Nat. Intell.*, 1857.

**TO AFRICANIZE.** To place under Negro domination.

**AFRICANIZATION.** The act of placing under Negro domination. This and the preceding are words of recent introduction by Southern political writers.

**AFTER NIGHT.** After nightfall; in the evening; as, "A meeting will be held in the court-house *after night*." This expression is said to be peculiar to the Middle States. — *Hurd's Grammatical Corrector*.

**AGGRAVATE.** Used improperly for maltreat, etc.

**AGUARDIENTE.** (Span.) A kind of brandy distilled from red wine, in Mexico and Cuba.

**AGUR-FORTY.** Aqua-fortis, vulgarly so called at the South-west.

The doctors fed me on lodlum tea and eperac, washed down with myrtle tea — 't wan't of no manner of use; they then tried *agur-forty* — if it had been agur-hundred, 't would n't have done. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Tuler*.

**AGUR**, for *ague*; *fever-an'-aguy*, for "fever and ague;" common among the uneducated, wherever this distressing disease is known. The word *ague* is pronounced in some localities so as to rhyme with *plague*.

**AHEAD.** Forward, in advance. This word, originally a sea term, is now in very common use by all classes of speakers and writers.

Our banks, being anxious to make money for their stockholders, are probably right to drive *ahead*, regardless of consequences, etc. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Nov. 29, 1845.

**AJEE.** Askew; as "to have one's hat *ajee*."

**ALAMO.** (Span.) See *Cotton-wood*.

**ALBANY BEEF.** Sturgeon; so called because it abounds in the Hudson River, and is much eaten in the city of Albany.

**ALBANY HEMP.** (*Urtica canadensis*.) Canada nettle, so called from the use made of its fibrous bark.

**ALDER.** Beside the true alders, various shrubs belonging to quite different families are so called, generally on account of a resemblance in the leaves; thus, *Rhamnus alniflorus* (alder-leaved buckthorn) is "dwarf alder;" *Clethra alnifolia* (sweet pepper bush) is "spiked" or "white alder;" *Prinos verticillatus* (winter berry) is "black alder."

**ALEWIFE, plur. Alewives.** (Indian, *aloof*. *Alosa vernalis*, Storer, Massachusetts Report.) A fish of the herring kind, abounding in the waters of New England.

The name appears to be an Indian one, though it is somewhat changed, as appears by the earliest account we have of it. In former times, the Indians made use of these fish to manure their lands, as the *menhaden* are now used. Mr. Winthrop says "Where the ground is bad or worn-out, they put two or three of the fishes called *aloofes* under or adjacent to each corn-hill; whereby they had many times a double crop to what the ground would otherwise have produced. The English have learned the like husbandry, where these *aloofes* come up in great plenty." — *Philosophical Trans.*, 1678.

**ALGIC.** Relating to the Algonkin tribes. Formed by Mr. Schoolcraft from the word *Algonkin*.

**ALIENAGE.** The state of being an alien. — *Webster*. Neither this nor the following word is to be found in the English dictionaries, except the recent one of Mr. Knowles. They are common, however, in professional books.

Where he sues an executor, etc., the plaintiff's *alienage* is no plea. — *Laires's Pleading on Assumpsit*, p. 687.

To restore estates, forfeitable on account of *alienage* — *Judge Story*.

**ALIENISM.** The state of being an alien. — *Webster, Knowles*.

The prisoner was convicted of murder; on his arraignment he suggested his *alienism*, which was admitted. — 2 *Johnson's Reports*, 381.

The law was very gentle in the construction of the disability of *alienism*. — *Chancellor Kent*.

**ALL ANY MORE.** A common expression in Pennsylvania among the illiterate to mean "all gone." Thus a servant will say, "The potatoes is *all any more*," i. e. are all gone; or she will say simply, "They's all."

**ALL-FIRED.** Enormous, excessive; enormously, excessively. A low expression; probably a puritanical corruption of *hell-fired*, designed to have the virtue of an oath without offending polite ears.

I was woked up by a noise in the street; so I jumps up in an *all-fired* hurry, ups with the window, and outs with my head. — *Sam Slick*.

I'm dying — I know I am! My mouth tastes like a rusty cent. The doctor will charge an *all-fired* price to cure me. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, 1845.

The first thing I know'd, my trowsers were plastered all over with hot molasses, which burnt *all-fired* bad — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 87.

Old Haines sweating like a pitcher with ice-water in it, and looking *all-fired* tired. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 50.

You see the fact is, Squino (said the Hooshner), they had a mighty deal to say up in our parts about Orleans, and how *all-fired* easy it is to make money in it; but it's no ham and all hominy, I reckon. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 67.

**ALL-FIREDLY.** Enormously, excessively.

Rum does every thing that is bad; wonder if it is rum that makes potatoes rot so *all-firedly*. — *Milne, Farm Fence*, p. 8.

**ALL-POSSESSED.** Affected by evil spirits, or demons; possessed.

Bill Jenkins was a dreadful mean man; used to get drunk every day, and swore like *all-possessed* when he got mad. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 30.

**ALL SORTS OF.** A Southern expression, synonymous with expert, acute, excellent, capital. It answers to the English slang term *bang-up* or *out-and-out*. It is a prevalent idiom of low life, and often heard in the colloquial language of the better informed. A man who in New England would be called a *curious* or a *smart* fellow, would in the South be called *all sorts of a fellow*.

She was *all sorts of a gal*—there warn't a sprinklin' too much of her: she had an eye that would make a fellow's heart try to get out of his bosom, her step was light as a panther's, and her breath sweet as a prairie flower. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

If you can only get Kit rid of them little failings [blindness and deafness], you 'll find him *all sorts of a horse*. — *Traits of Amer. Humor*.

**ALL-TO-PIECES.** 1. Excessively; as "I beat him last night at poker *all-to-pieces*."

2. Excessive, out and out.

Miss G—— sot down in a rocking-chair, hauled out her snuff-box, (for she was an *all-to-pieces* snufftaker,) and began to rock and snuff and rock as hard as ever she could. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 124.

**ALL-TO-SMASH.** Smashed to pieces. This expression is often heard in low and familiar language. It is an English provincialism. Mr. Halliwell says, that a Lancashire man, telling his master the mill-dam had burst, exclaimed, "Maister, maister, daun's brossen, and *aw's-to-smash*." — *Archaic and Prov. Dictionary*. See *Smash*.

**ALLEY.** 1. A place where the game of nine or ten pins is played; usually called a nine or ten pin alley, and sometimes simply an alley.

2. An ornamental marble, used by boys for shooting in the ring, etc.; also called in England, a *twig*. It is made of marble or of painted clay.

**ALLIGATOR.** 1. A large American reptile, resembling the Egyptian cro-

codile, having a wide, obtuse muzzle and unequal teeth. Though still numerous in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, they are no longer regarded as very dangerous. The name, according to Cuvier, is a corruption of the Portuguese *lagarto*, equivalent to the Latin *lacerta*.

2. In the Western States, the name is applied also to the *Menopoma allegheniensis*, a salamandroid animal.

**ALLIGATOR GAR.** The gar-fish of the South, so called from the resemblance its long jaws bear to those of the alligator.

**ALLIGATOR PEAR.** (*Laurus persea*.) A West Indian fruit, resembling a pear in shape. It contains within its rind a yellow butyraceous substance, which, when the fruit is perfectly ripe, constitutes an agreeable food. Also called Avocado or Avigato Pear. In England it is sometimes called Vegetable Marrow.

**TO ALLOT UPON.** To intend, to form a purpose; as, I *allot upon* going to Boston. Used by uneducated people in the interior of New England.

**TO ALLOW.** To declare, assert, maintain.

The lady of the cabin seemed kind, and *allowed* we had better stop where we were. — *Cullton, The New Purchase*.

Gentlemen from Arkansas *allowed* that California was no better than other countries; and the proof of it was, that they could only get twenty dollars a week and board offered them for driving an ox-team. — *Farnham, California*.

Ho 'lowed he'd ge me half a crown,  
An treat me wud some beer,  
If I wud make it up wud him,  
An let un goo off clear.

*Tom Cladpole's Journey to Lunnun.*

**ALLSPICE.** 1. The aromatic berry of the *Eugenia pimenta*, the Allspice Pimento or Bayberry Tree, a native of South America and the West India Islands. From being cultivated in Jamaica it is often called Jamaica Pepper.

2. The "sweet-scented shrub" (*Calycanthus floridus*) is also known as Carolina Allspice, the bark and wood having a somewhat spicy flavor.

**ALMIGHTY DOLLAR.** A term applied to money as "the root of all evil."

The *almighty dollar*, that great object of universal devotion throughout our land, seems to have no genuine devotee in these peculiar [Creole] villages. — *W. Irving, Wolfen's Roost*, p. 40.

The *almighty dollar* exerted a more powerful influence in California than in the old States; for it overcame all preëxisting false notions of dignity. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 165.

**ALONG.** Forward, on. Mrs. Trollope has the following words: "We must try to get *along*, as the Americans say." Lover also was puzzled to discover what the young American lady meant by saying that she was

so unwell that she "could not get *along*." An Englishman would say, *get on*.

TO ALTER. To geld; as horses, swine, etc.

ALONSENEL. The Mexican name for *Cowania stansburiana*, a plant growing extensively in the vicinity of Salt Lake, and held in great esteem as a styptic in hemorrhages, and as a general astringent.

ALUM-ROOT. (*Henckera americana*.) A plant so called from its astringency.

TO AMALGAMATE. This word, which properly denotes the uniting of mercury with other metals, is universally applied, in the United States, to the mixing of the black and white races.

AMALGAMATION. The mixing or union of the black and white races.

AMAZING. Amazingly, wonderfully, exceedingly. A vulgarism.

Every thing in New York on a May-day looks *amazin'* different, and smells *amazin'* different, I can tell you. — *Major Downing*, p. 43.

Mr Magwire is a steady, well-meanin' man — and has got along *amuzin'* prosperous in the world; but he has dreadful curious notions. — *Widow Bedott's Papers*, p. 49.

AMBIA. Used in the South and West for tobacco juice. It is a euphemism for the spittle produced by this voluntary ptyalism. More commonly spelled and pronounced *Ambeer*, probably from *Ambre* — denoting its color.

AMBITION. In North Carolina this word is used instead of the word *grudge*; as, "I had an *ambition* against that man." I am credibly informed, that it is even employed in this manner by educated men.

AMBITIOUS. Angry, enraged. A native of Georgia was heard to say, "I was powerful *ambitious* and cussed snortin'." The word is used in the West in a similar sense. Thus, they say an "*ambitious* horse," meaning thereby a horse that is fiery and unmanageable.

AMENABILITY. State of being amenable or answerable. — *Judge Story*.  
*Webster*. Not in the English dictionaries.

AMERICANISM. A way of speaking peculiar to this country. — *Witherspoon*.

"By *Americanism*," says Dr. Witherspoon, "I understand a use of phrases or terms, or a construction of sentences, even among persons of rank and education, different from the use of the same terms or phrases, or the construction of similar sentences, in Great Britain. In this sense it is exactly similar in its formation and signification to the word '*Scotticism*.'" — *Works*, Vol. IV.

**TO AMERICANIZE.** To render American; to naturalize in America. — *Webster.*

**AMERICANIZATION.** The act of rendering American, or of subjection to the laws and usages of the United States.

**AMONG THE MISSING.** To be *among the missing*, is to absent one's self.

If a person inquires if you are at home, the servant is directed to say, No, if you don't want to be seen, and choose to be *among the missing*. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 17.

The crowd of office-seekers in Washington will be *among the missing*, when they learn the President's decision. — *New York Herald.*

**AMONG, for between.** This word is often used when reference is made only to two persons. Ex. "The money was divided among us two."

**AMOST.** Almost. A vulgarism alike common in England and the United States. *E'en amost* is often heard in New England.

**ANAN.** How? What do you say? It is made use of in vulgar discourse by the lower class of persons addressing a superior, when they do not hear or comprehend what is said to them. It is going out of use now. — *Halliwell.* The word is common in Pennsylvania.

**ANCHOVY PEAR.** (*Grias cauliflora.*) A fruit of Jamaica. It is large, contains a stone, and is esculent.

**ANNEXATION.** Often used in the restricted sense of the addition of new territory to that of the United States, and often with the accessory idea of unlawful acquisition.

**ANNEXATIONIST.** One who favors the policy of annexation.

**AN'T or AIN'T.** A common colloquial abbreviation, both in England and America, for *am not* and *are not*. It is, however, often used among us, both by speakers and newspaper writers, instead of the proper abbreviation *isn't* for *is not*; as, "Is Sam a Know-nothing?" "He *ain't* nothing else."

**TO ANTI.** To risk; to venture a bet; as, "I'll *anti* all I'm worth on that." This term is derived from the game of poker—the amount placed in the pool by each player being called the *anti*. South-western.

**ANTI-FEDERALIST.** "This word was formed about the year 1788, to denote a person of the political party that opposed the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, which was then always spoken of by the name of the *Federal* Constitution. The word is not now much used; having been superseded by various other names, which have been successively given to the same party." — *Pickering's Vocabulary.*

**ANTI-MASON.** One hostile to masonry or free-masonry. — *Worcester.*

**ANTI-MASONIC.** Hostile to masonry.

**ANTI-MASONRY.** Hostility to masonry.

**ANTI-SLAVERY.** Hostile to slavery.

**ANY THING ELSE.** A hyperbolic phrase, denoting a strong affirmation, which has recently sprung up and become quite common, is given in the following quotation :—

*Loco Foco.* Did n't Gen. Cass get mad at Hull's cowardice, and break his sword ?

*Whig.* He did n't do any thing else. — *Newspaper.*

**ANY HOW YOU CAN FIX IT.** At any rate whatever.

**ANXIOUS MEETING.** A religious meeting consequent on a revival.

**ANXIOUS SEAT.** A term used in revival phraseology. A seat occupied by those who feel anxious about their spiritual welfare.

**APARAJO.** (Span., pron. *apardho.*) A pack-saddle. The word is employed in the countries acquired from Mexico, where pack-saddles are used.

**APISHAMORE.** A saddle-blanket, made of buffalo-calf skins, used on the great prairies.

Wolves are a constant annoyance on the plains, creeping to the camp fires, and gnawing the saddles and *apishamores*. — *Ruxton, Far West.*

**APPELLATE.** Relating to appeals.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, etc., the supreme court shall have *original* jurisdiction : In all other cases before mentioned, the supreme court shall have *appellate* jurisdiction. — *Constitut. of the United States*, Art. 3.

The king of France is not the fountain of justice ; the judges, neither the original nor the *appellate*, are of his nomination. — *Burke, Revolution.*

For a fuller account of this word, about which there has been much discussion by lexicographers, see Mr. Pickering's Vocabulary, where many authorities are cited. It was first given by Mason, in his supplement to Johnson's Dictionary, and was afterwards adopted by Todd.

**APPLE.** This name is given in the tropics to fruits of various kinds which are not apples ; as the Bel-apple, Cashew-apple, Custard-apple, Conch-apple, Ground-apple, Mamma-apple, Monkey-apple, Pine-apple, Sugar-apple, Wood-apple, etc.

**APPLE BUTTER.** A sauce made of apples stewed down in cider. This is generally made in quantity, and kept for use during the winter. The manufacture occupies a whole night, and is made the occasion of a frolic among the young folks.

**APPLE BRANDY,** } A liquor distilled from fermented apple-juice ; also  
**APPLE JACK.** } called Cider Brandy.

It was feared that the conquerors of Goed Hope, flushed with victory and *apple*



*brandy*, might march to the capital, take it by storm, and annex the whole province to Connecticut. — *W. Living, Knickerbocker.*

**APPLE TODDY.** A favorite mixture resembling punch, in which roasted apples take the place of lemons.

**APPLICANT.** One who applies himself closely to his studies. A sense of the word common in New England.

The English appear to use the word only in the sense of "one who applies for any thing," in which sense it is most commonly employed by us.

**APPOINTABLE.** That may be appointed or constituted; as officers are appointed by the Executive. — *Federalist, Webster.*

**TO APPRECIATE, v. a.** To raise the value of. — *Webster.* This sense of the word is not in any English dictionary except Knowles's, which is quite a recent work.

Lest a sudden peace should *appreciate* the money. — *Ramsay.*

Also, *v. n.* to rise in value; as, "the currency of the country *appreciates*." — *Webster.* The common acceptation of the word, however, with us, as in England, is to value, estimate.

**APPRECIATION.** A rising in value; increase of worth or value. — *Webster.* This noun, like the verb from which it is derived, is commonly used by us in its appropriate meaning of estimation, valuation; and this will hereafter be understood of all similar words where a peculiar meaning is assigned to them, unless an express statement is made to the contrary.

**TO APPROBATE.** (Lat. *approbo*, to approve.) This word was formerly much used at our colleges, instead of the old English word *approve*. The students used to speak of having their performances *approved* by their instructors. It is now in common use with our clergy as a sort of technical term, to denote a person who is licensed to preach; they would say, such a one is *approved*, that is, licensed to preach. It is also common in New England to say of a person who is licensed by the county courts to sell spirituous liquors, or to keep a public-house, that he is *approved*; and the term is adopted in the law of Massachusetts on this subject. — *Pickering's Vocabulary.*

Dr. Webster observes, that this is a modern word, but in common use in America. Mr. Todd introduces it in his edition of Johnson, from Cockeram's old vocabulary, the definition of which is, "to allow, to like." Mr. Todd says it is obsolete.

All things contained in Scripture is *approved* by the whole consent of all the clergy of Christendom. — *Sir T. Elyot's Governor*, fol. 226.

**TO ARGIFY.** To argue; also to import, signify. This word has a place

in several of the English glossaries. In this country it is only heard among the most illiterate.

**ARGUIFYING.** Arguing.

I listen to a preacher, and try to be better for his *arguifying*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**ARISTOCRATIC.** Strangely misapplied in those parts of the country where the population is not dense. The city, in the surrounding country towns, is deemed "aristocratic." The people in the villages consider the inhabitants of the towns "aristocratic," and so on. The term is not applied so much to those who make pretensions as to those who live in better style, and have more of the comforts and refinements of life about them; it is very common in small country newspapers and in political speeches in out of the way places.

There have been more than one hundred steamboat arrivals here since our last issue. We believe that the *aristocratic* Mayflower was among them. — *Illinois Paper*.

**ARK.** A large boat, employed on our rivers before the introduction of steamboats, to transport merchandise. See *Flat-Boat*.

**ARKANSAS TOOTHPICK.** A bowie knife of a peculiar kind, the blade of which shuts up into the handle.

Straightway leaped the valiant Slingsby  
Into amor of Seville,  
With a strong *Arkansas toothpick*,  
Screwed in every joint of steel.

*Bon Gaultier, American Ballads.*

**ARMORY.** A place or building where fire-arms are manufactured; as, the "Springfield Armory."

**AROUND.** About, near; as, "Sam is *around* in New York."

I was standing *around* when the fight took place. — *Police Gazette*.

A friend assures me he has heard a clergyman in his sermon say of one of the disciples, that "he stood *around* the cross."

**ARRIERO.** (Span.) A muleteer. The Mexicans, who are the most expert in this business, are invariably employed in Texas, and for all mule trains used in the commerce of the prairies.

**ARROW HEAD.** (*Sagittaria variabilis*.) A common and very variable aquatic plant, so called from the shape of its leaf.

**ARROW WOOD.** (*Viburnum dentatum*.) It is from the long and straight stems of this shrub that the Indians between the Mississippi and the Pacific make their arrows.

**ARROYO.** (Span.) See *Gulch*.

ARY or AIRY. A common corruption of *e'er a*; as "Lend me a dime."  
"I haven't got *ary* one." See also *Nary*.

The Court do declare, that if R. S—— arrest or molest any member of this colony, in *airy* other jurisdiction for lawfully obstructing him, this colony will stand by such.—*Rhode Island Col. Records*, 1659.

As, for that, which; as "nobody *as* I ever heard on." This vulgarism is confined to the illiterate. It is noticed in the Craven and Herefordshire Glossaries.

AS GOOD AS. In the phrase, I'd *as good's go* to New York, instead of "I might as well go to New York." Only heard among the illiterate.

AS LONG AS. Because, since. "We'll come, *as long as* it's pleasant." New York.

ASH-CAKE. A corn-cake baked in the ashes. Southern.

ASH-CART. A cart that goes from door to door to collect ashes.

ASH-HOPPER. A lye cask, or an inverted pyramidal box to contain ashes, resembling a hopper in a mill. They are common in the country, where people make their own soap.

ASHLANDERS. A club of Baltimore rowdies, so named probably from Henry Clay, of Ashland.

ASSOCIATED PRESS. A number of newspaper establishments in New York and elsewhere, which have entered into a joint arrangement for procuring telegraphic and other news to be equally furnished to them all, have assumed the name of "The *Associated Press*."

ASSOCIATION. 1. In ecclesiastical affairs, a society of the clergy, consisting of a number of pastors of neighboring churches, united for promoting the interests of religion and the harmony of the churches.—*Webster*.

2. In civil affairs, this word is much used at the present day, to denote the principle of uniting the producing classes in societies, for the purpose of obtaining for themselves a larger share of the fruits of their labor.

We do not claim that our rules are perfect, but we wish to make them so; being firmly convinced that the science taught by Fourier will ultimately lead us into true *Association*, if we follow it as a science, and that we must have some correct rules of progress to govern us during the transition period from civilization to *Association*.—*N. Y. Tribune*.

ASSOCIATIONAL. Pertaining to an association of clergymen.—*Webster*.

In order to obtain a license, and afterwards to be admitted to ordination, they (the students in divinity) must, in each case, pass through the *Associational* or Presbyterian examination.—*Quarterly Review*, 1815.

ASSOCIATIONIST. One who advocates the Fourier doctrine of association.

AT, for by. Used in the expression, "Sales *at* auction."

The English say, "Sales *by* auction," and this is in analogy with the expressions, Sales *by* inch of candle; Sales *by* private contract. — *Pickering's Vocab.*

AT, for in. The very common expressions "at the North," "at the West," instead of "in the North," "in the West," offend an English ear.

AT is often used superfluously in the South and West, as in the question, "Where is he *at*?"

AT THAT. A cant phrase, which has recently become popular. It is used to define more nearly or intensify something already said; as, "He's got a scolding wife, and an ugly one *at that*."

"Liquor up, gentlemen." We bowed. "Let me introduce you to some of the most highly esteemed of our citizens." We bowed again. "Now then, Mister," turning to the man at the bar, "drinks round, and cobbles *at that*." — *Notes on the N. Western States, Blackwood, Sept., 1855.*

ATAJO. (Span., pron. *atáho*.) A drove of pack-mules.

ATAMASCO LILY. (*Amaryllis atamasco*.) A small one-flowered lily, held in like esteem, in Virginia and North Carolina, with the daisy in England.

ATLANTIC STATES. States bordering on the Atlantic.

ATOLE. In the Spanish portions of North America, gruel, generally of corn-mcal.

ATTITUDINIZE. To assume affected attitudes. — *Worcester.*

AUNTY. A familiar term, often used in accosting an elderly woman.

AUTHORITY. In Connecticut the justices of the peace are denominated *the civil authority*. — *Webster.*

Mr. Pickering says: "This word is also used in some of the States in speaking collectively of the professors, etc., of our colleges, to whom the government of those institutions is intrusted."

The authority required him to give bonds for his good behavior. — *Miss H. Adams's Hist. of New England, p. 64.*

AVAILABLE. That may be used with success or advantage. — *Worcester.*

For some months past, a regular system of crying down Mr. Clay as *unavailable*, has been prosecuted with indefatigable energy and adroitness throughout the Union. . . . Mr. Clay is a great man — able statesman — all of us prefer him to anybody else *if* he could be elected, *but* I'm afraid he is n't *available*. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune, May, 1848.*

AVAILABILITY. Quality of being available. — *Worcester.* That qualification in a candidate which implies or supposes a strong probability of his success, apart from substantial merit, — a probability resulting from mere

personal or accidental popularity. The thing has long existed in the papal government, where the advanced age of a candidate for the triple crown has often been the motive of his election; the idea being that he would soon die out of the way, and leave the chair vacant for a new trial of strength under more favorable auspices, perhaps, for some of the electing cardinals. Inoffensiveness — exemption from strong hostility in any quarter — is a frequent element of availability. — *J. Inman*.

As this word is not noticed by any lexicographer except Dr. Worcester, and is now much used, it is thought advisable to give several examples of its use.

These political conventions are certainly becoming more odious and objectionable from year to year, and *availability*, not merit or qualifications, is the only requisite to secure a nomination. — *Baltimore Cor. of the N. Y. Herald*, May, 1848.

The only possible motive for the choice of Mr. Cass, that we can imagine, is his presumed *availability*, the elements of this being his known predilection, real or assumed, for territorial acquisition in all quarters, by warlike means as well as others, and his avowed devotion to the Southern or slave-holding interest. — *N. Y. Com. Adv*, May 26, 1848.

The whigs, within the last few days, have presented candidates for the highest office in the gift of the people, who are without any principles. . . . What do they mean by this in thus presenting candidates who have no principles? They proceed on the principle of mere *availability*, and nothing else. They are again going to insult your judgments, and tarnish the character of the nation, by their exhibitions of coon-skins and hard cider, and their midnight debaucheries, as they did in 1840. — *Speech of J. Bowlin, N. Y. Herald*, June 12, 1848.

**AVAILED.** Dr. Witherspoon notices this word as used in the following example: "The members of a popular government should be continually *availed* of the situation and condition of every part." — *Works*, Vol. IV. p. 296.

The newspapers sometimes say, "an offer" (for instance) "was made but not *availed of*."

**AVAILS.** Profits, or proceeds. It is used, in New England, for the proceeds of goods sold, or for rents, issues, or profits. — *Webster*.

Expecting to subsist on the bounty of government, rather than on the *avails* of their own industry. — *Stoddard's Louisiana*.

It is used in other parts of the country in like manner.

**AVALANCHE.** A Texan corruption of the French *Ambulance*. A spring waggon.

**AVERSE.** On the use of this word, Mr. Pickering has the following remarks: "American writers, till within some years past, generally employed the preposition *to* instead of *from* with this adjective." Dr. Witherspoon thinks, that "as *averse* properly signifies turned away, it seems an evident improvement to say *averse from*;" and the Scottish writers

generally seem to have preferred this. Dr. Campbell, however, observes, that "the words *averse* and *aversion* are more properly construed with *to*, than with *from*. The examples in favor of the latter preposition are, beyond comparison, outnumbered by those in favor of the former. The argument from etymology is here of no value, being taken from the use of another language. If, by the same rule, we were to regulate all nouns and verbs of Latin original, our present syntax would be overturned." Dr. Webster remarks to the same effect. Mr. Todd says many examples may be brought to show the prevalent use of the word *from* in connection with *averse*, before Clarendon; but now the usage of *to* prevails.

AVOCADO PEAR. See *Alligator Pear*.

AWFUL. 1. Disagreeable, detestable, ugly. A word much used among the common people in New England, and not unfrequently among those who are educated. The expression, "an *awful*-looking woman," is as often heard as "an ugly woman."

The country people of the New England States make use of many quaint expressions in their conversation. Every thing that creates surprise is *awful* with them: "What an *awful* wind! *awful* hole! *awful* hill! *awful* mouth! *awful* nose!" etc. — *Lambert's Travels in Canada and the United States*.

The practice of moving on the first day of May, with one half the New-Yorkers, is an *awful* custom. — *Major Downing, May-Day in New York*.

2. Very great, excessive. This sense of the word is peculiar to the West.

Pot-pie is the favorite dish, and woodsmen, sharp set, are *awful* eaters. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 182.

It is even used in this sense adverbially, and with still greater impropriety, like many other adjectives. Thus we not unfrequently hear such expressions as "an *awful* cold day."

There was Old Crane pokin' round among the gals, and mighty particular to Kezier Winkle. Ain't it ridiculous? I don't see what he could fancy about her. I never thought she was so *awful* handsome as some folks does. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

AWFULLY. Exceedingly, excessively.

The chimneys were *awfully* given to smoking. — *Carlton, New Purchase*.

TO AXE. (Ang. Sax. *acsian*, *axian*.) To ask. This word is now considered a vulgarism; though, like many others under the same censure, it is as old as the English language. Among the early writers it was used with the same frequency as *ask* is now. In England it still exists in the colloquial dialect of Norfolk and other counties. "A trueborn

Londoner," says Pegge, "always *axes* questions, *axes* pardon, and at quadrilles, *axes* leave."

And Pilate *axide* him, Art thou Kyng of Jewis? And Jhesus answeide and seide to lum, Thou seist — *Wicliff, Trans. of the Bible.*

A poor lazard, upon a tide,  
Came to the gate, and *axed* meate. — *Gower, Con. Anc.*

Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, in a letter to her son, Henry VII., concludes with —

As lerty blessings as ye can *axe* of God. — *Lord Howard.*

In the next reign, Dr. John Clarke writes to Cardinal Wolsey, and tells him that —

The King *axed* after your Grace's welfare. — *Pegge's Anecdote.*

The word is much used by the uneducated in the United States.

Day before yesterday, I went down to the post-office, and *ax'd* the postmaster if there was any thing for me. — *May. Jones's Countship*, p. 172.

I have often *axed* myself what sort of a gall that splendidous Lady of the Lake of Scott's was. — *Sam Slick in Eng.*, ch. 30.

## B.

**BABES.** The name of a set of Baltimore rowdies.

**BACK, v.** To *back* a letter, is Western for to "direct" it.

**BACK** is often used for *ago*; as in the phrase, "a little while *back*," i. e. "a short time ago."

**BACK AND FORTH.** Backwards and forwards, applied to a person in walking; as, "He was walking *back and forth*." A common expression in the familiar language of New England.

**BACKBONE.** Moral stamina, strength of will, firmness of purpose. A figurative expression recently much used in political writings.

Infirmity of purpose is the cause of more serious lapses of infirmity of principle. Men do not know how to resist the small temptations of life, from some deficiency in their dorsal arrangements; and the natural result is a departure from the right. *Backbone* is the material which is designed to make an upright man; and he must be firm on all points, if he would pass scatheless through the struggle of life. — *The Republic*, 1857.

**TO BACK DOWN.** To withdraw a charge, eat one's own words; as, "I asked Jenkins, before witnesses, if he had called me a cheat; and he *backed right down*."

**BACK-HOUSE.** A necessary house, privy; so called from its position. In some parts of England it is called the Backward. Comp. the Lat. *posticum*.

**TO BACK OUT, v.** To retreat from a difficulty, to refuse to fulfil a promise or engagement. A metaphor borrowed from the stables. Equivalent expressions are *to back water*, *to take the back track*.

Mr. Bodinger, in his remarks in the House of Representatives on the Mexican war, January 25, 1848, said. "He regretted the bloodshed in Mexico, and wished it would stop. But, he asked, would gentlemen be willing to *back out*, and forsake our rights? No, no No turning back. This great country must go ahead."

The whigs undertook to cut down the price of painting to a fair rate, but at last *backed out*, and voted to pay the old prices. — *New York Tribune*.

To all appearance, we are on the eve of a bloody contest, if not a revolution. What will be the consequence? One or the other party must *back out*, or no one can tell what will be the result. — *National Intelligencer*.

'T would save some whole cartloads of fuss, an' three or four monthis o' jaw,  
If some illustrious patriot should *back out* and withdraw.

*Bigelow Papers*, p. 124.

**BACK OUT.** A backing out, retreating.

Well, boys, you know Hoss Allen — no *back out* in him, anyhow! — *Hoss Allen, of Missouri*.

**BACK TRACK.** To *take the back track* is to retrace one's steps, to retreat; and hence is equivalent to *to back out*. Western.

**TO BACK WATER, v.** To retreat, or withdraw; a Western metaphor, derived from steamboat language.

**BACKING AND FILLING.** Advancing and retreating, shilly-shally, indecision. A nautical metaphor, used also, it is believed, in England.

There has been so much *backing and filling* not only upon the Cuba question, but upon every other, that no confidence can be placed in the declaration which either Gen. Pierce or his cabinet may make. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 15, 1854.

A *backin' and fillin'* and wrigglin' policy will never fetch any thing about. — *Maj. Downing*.

**BACKWARD.** Is sometimes used in the West for *bashful*, unwilling to appear in company, on the same principle as "forward" in correct language means the very contrary.

**BACKWOODS.** The partially cleared forest region on the western frontier of the United States, called also the *back settlements*. This part of the country is regarded as the back part or rear of Anglo-American civilization, which fronts on the Atlantic. It is rather curious that the English word *back* has thus acquired the meaning of *western*, which it has in several Oriental languages, and also in Irish.

**BACKWOODSMAN.** In the United States, an inhabitant of the forest on the Western frontier. — *Webster*.

The project of transmuting the classes of American citizens and converting sailors into *backwoodsmen* is not too monstrous for speculators to conceive and desire. — *Fisher Ames's Works*, p. 144.



I presume, ladies and gentlemen, it is your curiosity to hear the plain, uneducated *backwoodsman* in his home style. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 126.

**BAD.** Badly; greatly, very much. Examples: "That bile hurts me *bad*." "I want to see him *bad*."

**BAGASSE.** (Fr.) Stalks of sugar-cane, from which the juice has been expressed. It is used as fuel under the sugar-kettle. Called also Cane-trash.

**BAGASSE FURNACE.** A furnace arranged to burn the sugar-cane stalks.

**BAGGAGE.** Literally, what is contained in a bag or bags; the clothing or other conveniences which a traveller carries with him on a journey. The English appear to have discarded the word altogether for the less appropriate term *luggage*.

Having despatched my *baggage* by water to Altdoif. — *Core*.

This is sometimes called more fully *bag and baggage*.

Seventeen members of Congress arrived to-day with their *bag and baggage*. — *Washington Paper*.

**BAGGAGE-CAR.** The car on a railroad in which the baggage is stowed. It is placed next behind the tender.

**BAGGAGE-SMASHER.** A man who transfers baggage to and from railroad cars, steamboats, etc. So called from the reckless manner in which these persons handle the property of travellers.

**BAGGING.** See *Cotton-Bagging*.

**BAKE-OVEN.** This term is often used in the West for the simple word *oven* in a bakery. It is also applied to the iron bake-pan.

**BALANCE.** A mercantile word originally introduced into the ordinary language of life by the Southern people, but now improperly used throughout the United States to signify the *remainder* of any thing. The *balance* of money, or the *balance* of an account, are terms well authorized and proper; but we also frequently hear such expressions as the "*balance* of a speech;" "the *balance* of the day was idly spent;" "a great many people assembled at the church: a part got in, the *balance* remained without."

The yawl returned to the wreck, took ten or eleven persons and landed them, and then went and got the *balance* from the floating cabin. — *Albany Journal*, January 7, 1846.

Most of the respectable inhabitants held commissions in the army or government offices; the *balance* of the people kept little shops, cultivated the ground, etc. — *Williams's Florida*, p. 115.

The boats of the South Ferry forced their way through the ice, and kept up their communication for the *balance* of the day. — *New York Tribune*.

**BALD FACE.** Common (penny) whiskey, particularly when it is new; also figuratively and appropriately called Red Eye.

**BALLOT-BOX STUFFING.** A new name for a new crime. This consists in the use of a box for receiving ballots at an election, so constructed with a false bottom and compartments as to permit the introduction of spurious ballots to any extent by the party having it in charge. In California the most outrageous frauds have been committed by this means.

**BALLYHACK**—"Go to Ballyhack!" a common expression in New England. I know not its origin. It savors in sound, however, of the Emerald Isle.

"You and Obed are here too"

"Let Obed go to Ballyhack. Come along out."—*Margaret*, p 55

**BALM OF GILEAD.** (*Populus canadensis*.) A tree, which extends from New England to Wisconsin and Kentucky. It is rare in a wild state, but common in cultivation.—*Gray*.

**BALSAM FIR.** (*Abies balsamea*.) A slender tree growing in cold, damp woods and swamps, from New England to Pennsylvania and northwards. The blisters under the bark furnish the well-known "Canada Balsam;" hence its name. It is also called Canada Balsam and Gilead Fir.

**BALSAM POPLAR.** (*Populus balsamifera*.) A tall tree growing from New England to Wisconsin and northwards. Its large buds are varnished with a fragrant, resinous matter.—*Gray*.

**BANANA.** The fruit of the *Musa sapientum*, a well-known tropical fruit, imported into the United States from the West Indies.

**BAND.** A troop or herd of bisons is called, in prairie parlance, "a band of buffalo."

**BANDED DRUM.** See *Grunter*.

**BANGO!** A common exclamation among the negroes both North and South.

**BANJO.** A rude sort of guitar, a favorite instrument with the negroes. The term itself is probably of negro origin.

How oft when a boy, with childish joy,

I've roam'd at the close of day,

When our work was done, to have some fun,

And hear the banjo play.—*Negro Melody*.

Ole Nashville dey say is a very nice town,

Dar de niggers pick de cotton till de sun goes down;

Dey dance all night to de ole banjo,

Wid a corn-stalk fiddle and a shoe-string bow.—*Negro Melodies*.

**BANKABLE.** Receivable at a bank, as bills; or discountable, as notes.—*Webster*.

Among the great variety of bank-notes which constitute our circulating medium, many are below par, and consequently are not received at the banks. Those only which are redeemed with specie or its equivalent are received at the banks, and are of the class called *bankable*.

**BANK BILL.** A promissory note issued by a banking company. This is the term generally used in the United States; while in England *bank note* is as regularly employed.

**BANKER.** A vessel employed in fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland. "There were employed in the fisheries 1,232 vessels, namely, 584 to the Banks, 648 to the Bay and Labrador; the *bankers* may be put down at 36,540 tons."

The vessels that fish at the Labrador and Bay are not so valuable as the *bankers*, more particularly those from Maine, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. — *J. Q. Adams on the Fisheries*, p. 219.

**BANNOCK.** (Gaelic, *bonnach*. Irish, *boinneag*.) In Scotland, a cake of oatmeal, baked on an iron plate.

Behind the door a bag of meal;  
And in the kist was plenty  
Of good hard cakes his mither bakes;  
And *bannocks* were nae scanty. — *Scotch Songs*, II. 71.

In New England, cakes of Indian meal, fried in lard, are called *bannocks*.

**BANQUETTE.** The name for the side-walk in some of our Southern cities.

**TO BANTER.** To challenge, defy; namely, to a race, a shooting-match, etc. Southern and Western.

**BANTER.** A challenge. Southern and Western. "There will be a *banter* on the bare ground," meaning a shooting-match.

**BAR**, for bear. The common pronunciation in certain parts of the Southern and Western States.

**BARBECUE.** A term used in the Southern States and in the West Indies for dressing a hog whole; which, being split to the backbone, is laid flat upon a large gridiron, and roasted over a charcoal fire. — *Johnson. Webster.*

A writer in the Westminster Review supposes the word to be a corruption of the French *barbe-à-queue*, i. e. from snout to tail; comp. *cap-à-pié*, from head to foot.

Oldfield, with more than harpy throat endued,  
Cries, "Lend me, gods, a whole hog *barbecued*." — *Pope*.  
Now the festive board with viands is stored.  
Savory dishes be there, I weon;  
Rich puddings and big, and a *barbecued* pig,  
And ox-tail soup in a China tureen. — *Ingoldsby Legends*.

This word is now much used in the South and West for a public meeting in the open air with a dinner or other refreshments.

A genuine Virginia *barbecue*, whether of a social or a political character, is a rural entertainment which deserves more praise than censure; and we know of none which affords the stranger a better opportunity of studying the character of the yeomanry of the Southern States. — *Lawman's Adventures*, Vol. II. p. 259.

**TO BARBERIZE.** A term among country hairdressers. "I can *shoemake* through the week, and *barberize* on public days;" that is, on days of public business, which call farmers to the country town. *To barber* is so used in old writers.

**BARGE.** A vessel of burden, employed on the Mississippi and its tributaries before the introduction of steamboats. It is thus described by Flint: "The *barge* is of the size of an Atlantic schooner. It had sails, masts, and rigging, not unlike a sea vessel, and carried from fifty to an hundred tons. On the lower courses of the Mississippi, when the wind did not serve and the waters were high, it was worked up stream by the operation that is called 'warping' — a most laborious, slow, and difficult mode of ascent, in which six or eight miles a day was good progress." — *Hist. and Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

Thirty years ago *safety barges* were introduced upon the Hudson, soon after several serious disasters by the explosion of boilers — these were large and comfortable vessels, solely for the accommodation of passengers, and were towed by a steamboat. Making their trips but slowly, they soon went out of fashion — and the word *burge* was then applied to freight vessels towed by steamboats — of these, however, several were towed by one boat.

**TO BARK A TREE.** To make a circular incision through the bark so as to kill the tree. See *Girdle*.

**TO BARK OFF SQUIRRELS.** A common way of killing squirrels among those who are expert with the rifle, in the Western States, is to strike with the ball the bark of the tree immediately beneath the squirrel; the concussion produced by which kills the animal instantly without mutilating it. — *Audubon, Ornithology*, Vol. I. p. 294.

**TO BARK UP THE WRONG TREE.** A common expression at the West, denoting that a person has mistaken his object, or is pursuing the wrong course to obtain it. In hunting, a dog drives a squirrel or other game into a tree, where, by a constant barking, he attracts its attention until the hunter arrives. Sometimes the game escapes, or the dog is deceived, and *barks up the wrong tree*.

If you think to run a rig on me, you have made a mistake in the child, and *barked up the wrong tree*. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 124.

When people try to hunt [office] for themselves, . . . . and seem to be *barking up the wrong sapling*, I want to put them on the right trail. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 205.

**BARM.** (Ang. Sax. *beorm*.) Yeast. This old English word is preserved in New England.

**BARNBURNERS.** A nickname given in the State of New York to the more radical and progressive section of the Democratic party, otherwise called the Young Democracy, as opposed to the conservative tendencies of old Hunkerism. See *Hunker*.

This school of Democrats was termed *Barnburners*, in allusion to the story of an old Dutchman, who relieved himself of rats by burning down his barns which they infested, — just like exterminating all banks and corporations, to root out the abuses connected therewith. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**BARRACH.** A straw-thatched roof supported by four posts, capable of being raised or lowered at pleasure, under which hay is kept. Also called, in New York, *hay-barrach*, probably from the Dutch.

**BARRACLADE.** (Dutch, *barre kledereen*, cloths undressed or without a nap.) A home-made woollen blanket without nap. This word is peculiar to New York city, and those parts of the State settled by the Dutch.

**BARRANCA.** (Span.) A deep break or ravine, caused by heavy rains or a watercourse. The banks of such are always steep and abrupt, like a wall, owing to the tenacity of the soil, and the suddenness with which they are made. A sloping bank by a river's side, or a similarly formed ravine, is not a *barranca*. These perpendicular walls of earth are found in Texas and New Mexico, and are a marked feature in their topography. The *Barrancas* which bound on one side the battle-field of Buena Vista are very remarkable.

**BARRENS.** Elevated lands or plains upon which grow small trees, but never timber. They are classed as Pine-barrens, Oak-barrens, etc., according to the kind of tree which prevails upon them. In Kentucky, the term is applied to certain regions in the carboniferous limestone formation, the soil of which is really very fertile. Hence Barren county and Barren river. In these places the water flows in subterranean channels; and hence a dryness of the surface, which, according to some, has permitted annual fires to sweep off the timber, while, according to others, it has not permitted its growth.

**BARREN GROUND REINDEER.** (*Tarandus arcticus*, Rich.) A species of Caribou confined almost entirely to the "Barren Grounds," the north-eastern corner of North America. It occurs also in Greenland. — *S. F. Baird*.

**BASE.** A game of ball much played in America, so called from the three *bases* or stations used in it. That the game and its name are both English is evident from the following article in Halliwell's Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words: "*Base-ball*. A country game mentioned in *Moor's Suffolk Words*, p. 238."

**BASKET MEETING.** In the West a sort of pic-nic, generally with some religious "exercises."

**BASS.** A name applied to several species of excellent sea and lake fish. See *Black Bass*, *Sea Bass*, *Striped Bass*.

**BASSWOOD.** (*Tilia americana*.) A tree resembling the European lime or linden; from the use of its inner bark for making mats or cordage, the tree is also called *bast* or *bass*. The name, however, is now obsolete in England. In the United States it is also called White-wood.

From the idea of pliability (both in the bark and wood), the name of the tree is made a reproach in the following extract from one of Brigham Young's "sermons!"

I say, as the Lord lives, we are bound to become a sovereign State in the Union, or an independent nation by ourselves; and let them drive us from this place if they can, — they cannot do it. I do not throw this out as a banter. You Gentiles and hickory and *basswood* Mormons can write it down, if you please; but write it as I speak it.

**TO BAT.** *To bat the eyes*, in Southern parlance, is to wink.

**BATTERY.** A sort of boat used for duck-shooting in the Chesapeake, in which the shooter lies below the surface of the water. It is also called, among other local names, a Surface-boat, Coffin-boat, Sink, or Box. — *Lewis, American Sportsman*.

**BAY.** 1. An arm of a prairie extending into, and partly surrounded by, woods.

2. A piece of low, marshy ground, producing large numbers of Bay-trees. North Carolina.

**BAYBERRY.** (*Myrica cerifera*.) A shrub, with fragrant leaves, having an odor resembling that of the bay. The berries, when boiled in water, yield a fragrant green wax, known as "bayberry tallow," used for making candles, etc.

**BAY RUM.** A liquor obtained by distilling the leaves of the bay-tree. It is chiefly used for the purposes of the toilet.

**BAY LAUREL.** See *Bay-tree*.

**BAY STATE.** The State of Massachusetts. The original name of the colony was *Massachusetts Bay*. Hence among the New England people it was usually called the *Bay State*.

**BAYOU.** (Fr. *boyau*, a gut.) In Louisiana, the outlet of a lake; a channel for water.

**BEACH-COMBERS.** The long waves rolling in from the ocean.

**BEAKER.** A large drinking-glass, a tumbler. The word is used in the north of England and in Scotland, and by old persons in New England. In what may be called bacchanalian poetry, it is still used by us precisely as it was in England centuries ago.

Fill him his *beaker*, he will never flinch  
To give a full quart pot the empty pinch.  
*Rowland's Humors Ordinarie.*

Then fill up your *beaker*! A bumper I claim  
For the toast that each heart will respond to.  
*Rough and Ready Songs.*

Every one is familiar with the chorus in the beautiful song of C. F. Hoffman, entitled "Sparkling and Bright."

Then fill to-night with hearts as light,  
To loves as gay and fleeting  
As bubbles that swim on the *beaker's* brim,  
And break on the lips while meeting.

**BEAR.** A word to denote a certain description of stockjobbers. — *Johnson*.

The same term is used among the brokers and stockjobbers of Wall street, New York. Their plans of operation are as accurately described in the annexed extract from Warton as they can be at the present moment:

He who sells that of which he is not possessed is proverbially said to sell the skin before he has caught the *bear*. It was the practice of stockjobbers, in the year 1720, to enter into a contract for transferring South Sea stock at a future time for a certain price; but he who contracted to sell had frequently no stock to transfer, nor did he who bought intend to receive any in consequence of his bargain; the seller was therefore called a *bear*, in allusion to the proverb, and the buyer a *bull*, perhaps only as a similar distinction. The contract was merely a wager, to be determined by the rise or fall of stock; if it rose, the seller paid the difference to the buyer, proportioned to the sum determined by the same computation to the seller. — *Dr. Warton on Pope*.

There has been a very important revolution made in the tactics of a certain extensive operator in Wall street. The largest *bull* in the street has become a *bear*, and the rank and file have been thrown into the greatest confusion and left without a leader. — *New York Herald*.

**BEAR-BERRY.** See *Kinnikinnick*.

**BEAR-GRASS.** (*Yucca filamentosa*.) Sometimes called Silk Grass, from the fibres which appear on the edges of the leaves. It is not a grass.

**TO BEAR A HAND.** A seaman's phrase. To go to work; to assist; to make haste.

**BEAR STATE.** A name by which the State of *Arkansas* is known at the West. I once asked a Western man if Arkansas abounded in bears, that it should be designated as the "Bear State?" "Yes," said he, "it does; for I never knew a man from that State but he was a *bar*, and in fact the people are all *barish* to a degree."

**BEAR-WALLOW.** See *Hog-Wallow*.

**BEAST.** A common name for a horse in the Southern and Western States. It is quite common to see in villages the invitation to travellers, "Entertainment for man and beast;" and in the Bible we read, "A certain Samaritan . . . set him on his own *beast*."

**TO BEAT.** 1. To excel, surpass in a contest. Thus we say, one racer or steamer *beats* another. So too, "It *beats* all creation," i. e. surpasses every thing.

The widow Bedott is the brazen-facedest critter t'ever lived, — it does *beat* all. I never see her equal. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 77.

2. To overcome with astonishment, to amaze, astound. We sometimes hear, especially from the mouths of old people, such expressions as, "I felt *beat*," "I was quite *beat*," i. e. utterly astonished.

**BEAT, n.** One who excels or surpasses another, a superior.

Sam Slick was a queer chap. I never see the *beat* of him. — *Yankee Hill's Stories*.

**BEAT OUT.** Tired or fagged out.

**BEAU.** This word, nearly obsolete in England, is in common use with us to mean a lover, sweetheart.

**TO BEAU.** To act in the capacity of a gallant or beau.

Well, I got to *beauin'* Miss Patience about a spell; and kept my eye on Nanco, to see how the cat was jumpin'. — *Yankee Hill's Stories*.

**BEAUTIFUL.** Excellent, applied to articles of food; as, "beautiful butter," "beautiful rolls." This absurd use of the term is by no means confined to the illiterate. The word *elegant* is less frequently abused in the same manner.

**BEAVER.** (*Castor americanus*.) This well-known animal, of which naturalists enumerate several varieties, is said to extend over the North American continent from the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi to



about 68° north latitude, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with the exception of the barren districts.

**BEAVER-DAM.** The obstruction placed across a stream by beavers.

**BEAVER-TREE.** (*Magnolia glauca*.) Called also Beaver-wood, and sometimes Castor-wood, probably from the preference shown by the beavers for the bark as food, or for the wood as useful in their structures.

**BED-SPREAD.** In the interior parts of the country, the common name for a bed-quilt, or coverlet. See *Spread*.

**BEE.** An assemblage of people, generally neighbors, to unite their labors for the benefit of an individual or family. The *quilting-bees* in the interior of New England and New York are attended by young women, who assemble around the frame of a bed-quilt, and in one afternoon accomplish more than one person could in weeks. Refreshments and beaux help to render the meeting agreeable. *Apple-bees* are occasions when the neighbors assemble to gather apples or to cut them up for drying. *Husking-bees*, for husking corn, are held in barns, which are made the occasion of much frolicking. In new countries, when a settler arrives, the neighboring farmers unite with their teams, cut the timber, and build him a log-house in a single day; these are termed *raising-bees*.

**BEE-GUM.** In the South and West, a term originally applied to a species of the gum-tree from which beehives were made; and now to beehives made of any kind of boards. See *Gum*.

**BEE-LINE.** Bees, after having loaded themselves with honey, always fly back to the hive in a direct line. Hence, a *bee-line* is the straightest course from one point to another. It is sometimes called an *air-line*.

This road is one of nature's laying. It goes determinedly straight up and straight down the hills, and in a *bee-line*, as we say. — *Mrs. Clavers*.

The sweetened whiskey I had drank made me so powerful thick-legged, that when I started to walk, my track wasn't any thing like a *bee-line* — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

We moved on like men in a dream. Our foot-marks, seen afterwards, showed that we had steered a *bee-line* for the brig. — *Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. I. p. 198.

Sinners, you are making a *bee-line* from time to eternity; and what you have once passed over you will never pass again. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 215.

**BEE-TREE.** In the South and West a tree, often found hollow, in which the wild honey-bee makes its hive or nest. See *Gum-tree*.

**BEGGAR-TICKS.** A species of *Bidens* whose seeds (fruit) adhere to the clothes. The term is also applied to a species of *Desmodium* whose pods break at the joints; the latter is sometimes called Beggar-Lice.

**BEECH-DROPS.** A term applied to various plants without green foliage, parasitic on the roots of the beech.

**BEEF.** In Louisiana, Texas, and some other parts of the South-west, an ox is called a *beef*, and oxen, *beeves*.

**BEEF-DODGER.** Meat biscuit. Comp. *Corn-dodger*.

It is a small party, but great in the requisite qualifications, and goes unincumbered with superfluities: no wheels, two or three mules apiece, and pinole, pemmican, and *beef-dodgers* for their principal support. — *Speech of Col. Denton*, May 7, 1853.

**BEING.** Pres. part. of the verb *to be*, equivalent to *because*.

This word is noticed by Boucher, as much in use in the Middle States of America, and as an idiom of the Western counties of England. It is also heard among the illiterate in New England.

I sent you no more peasen, *been* the rest would not have suited you. — *Boucher's Glossary*.

And *beinge* that a barrell of fuis was lost in the shippe, the collonie hath taken order for the recruitinge of that loss — *Rhode Island Records*, 1658.

The charge of the matter shall be borne by the towne of Wauwick, *beinge* they have been at some charges already. — *Ibid.*, 1659.

"Got a prime nigger," said the slave-trader; "an A number one cook, and no mistake! Picked her up real cheap, and I'll let you have her for eight hundred dollars, *being* as you're a minister." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 313.

The mug cost fifteen pence when 't was new; but *bein'* it had an old crack in it, I told her she need n't pay but a shilling for it. — *May. Downing*.

*Bein'* ye'll help Obed, I'll give ye the honey. — *Margaret*, p. 20.

**BELIKED.** Liked, beloved. A Western term.

I do believe me and Nancy was *beliked* by the Indians; and many's the venison and turkey they fotch'd us as a sort of present, and may be a kind of pay for bread-stuffs and salt Nancy used to give them. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*.

This gentleman is generally *beliked* by his fellow-citizens. — *Baltimore Cor. of the N. Y. Herald*.

**BELITTLE.** To make smaller, to lower in character. — *Webster*.

Mr. Pickering says: A well known English Review, in enumerating the faults of our writers, thus mentions this, among other words: "President Jefferson talks of *belittling* the productions of nature." — *Quart. Rev.*, X. 528.

We fear men's minds grow really *belittled*, where they ought to be enlarged. — *Brook Eastford*, p. 124.

Mr. Goodrich, in his "Reminiscences," says, when he returned to his native place, after many years' absence in Europe:

Every thing looked *belittled*, degenerated in dimensions. The church seemed small, the galleries low, the pulpit mean. — Vol. I. p. 309.

"I won't stand that," said Mr. Slick, "I won't stay here and see you *belittle* Uncle Sam for nothin'. He ain't worse than John Bull, arter all" — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 19.

An article in the *New York Times*, relative to Congressional corruption's being made the subject of discussion in the House of Representatives, says:

Upon a motion being made for a committee of investigation, the usual efforts were made to *belittle* the press, and treat its censures with contempt. — *New York Times*, Jan. 10, 1857.

BELLOWS FISH. See *Sea-Devil*.

BELONGINGS. In the "*Washington Union*" is an advertisement headed "*Gentlemen's belongings*;" from which it appears that this term means the under garments of gentlemen, such as shirts, drawers, stockings, etc.

BELLY-GUTS. More commonly Belly cutter or gutter. 1. A term applied by boys to the manner of sliding down hill on their sleds, when lying on their bellies.

2. In Pennsylvania, molasses candy is so called.

BELLWORT. The popular name of plants of the genus *Uvularia*.

BENDER. In New York, a spree, a frolic. To "*go on a bender*," is to go on a spree.

The friends of the new married couple did nothing for a whole month but smoke and drink metheglin during the *bender* they called the honeymoon. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 276.

A couple of students of Williams College went over to North Adams on a *bender*. This would have been a serious matter under the best of circumstances, but each returned with "*a buck in his hat*," etc. — *Newspaper*, April, 1857.

I met her at the Chinese room ;  
She wore a wreath of roses,  
She walked in beauty like the night,  
Her breath was like sweet posies.  
I led her through the festal hall,  
Her glance was soft and tender ;  
She whispered gently in my ear,  
"Say, Mose, ain't this a *bender* ?"

*Putnam's Monthly*, Aug., 1854.

BENCH. Besides the usual English acceptation of this word, it is applied to a long seat without a back, such as is used in schools, and which in England is called a *form*.

BENCH and BENCH MARK. In civil engineering — a permanent, level mark on a rock, or the root or stump of a tree, upon which a levelling-staff can be placed.

BERMUDIAN VINE. See *Chicken Grape*.

BESTOWMENT. 1. The act of giving gratuitously ; a conferring. — *Webster*. This word, which is much used by our theological writers, is not in the English dictionaries.

God the Father had committed the *bestowment* of the blessings purchased to his Son. — *Edwards on Redemption*.

If we consider the *bestowment* of gifts in this view. — *Chauncey, U. Lab.*

2. That which is conferred or given. — *Webster*.

They strengthened his hands by their liberal *bestowments* on him and his family. — *Christian Magazine*, III. 665.

The free and munificent *bestowment* of the Sovereign Judge. — *Theodicy*.

Mr. Todd has *bestowal* in his edition of Johnson, but cites no authority for its use. Dr. Webster thinks *bestowment* preferable on account of the concurrence of the two vowels in *bestowal*.

BETTER, for *more* ; as, "It is *better* than a year since we met." This use of the word is provincial in England.

BETTERMENTS. (Generally used in the plural number.) The improvements made on new lands, by cultivation and the erection of buildings. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

"This word," adds Mr. Pickering, "was first used in the State of *Vermont*, but it has for a long time been common in the State of *New Hampshire* ; and it has been getting into use in some parts of *Massachusetts*, since the passing of the late law, similar to the *Betterment Acts* (as they are called) of the States above mentioned. It is not to be found in Mr. *Webster's* nor in any of the *English* dictionaries that I have seen, except *Ash's* ; and there it is called 'a bad word.' It is thus noticed by an English traveller in this country, in speaking of those people who enter upon new lands without any right, and proceed to cultivate them :

These men demand either to be left owners of the soil or paid for their *betterments* ; that is, for what they have done towards clearing the ground. — *Kendall, Travels in the United States*, Vol. III. p. 160."

BETTERMOST. The best. The word, which is provincial in England, is used in New England.

The *bettermost* cow, an expression we do not find in Shakspeare or Milton. — *Mrs. Kirkland*.

Sometimes is heard the expression *bettermost best* ; as, "These girls are dressed in their *bettermost best*."

BETTY. (Ital. *bocchetta*.) A pear-shaped bottle wound around with straw, in which olive oil is brought from Italy. Called by chemists a "Florence flask."

BETWEEN HAY AND GRASS. Between boyhood and manhood.

**B'HOYS.** i. e. Boys, a name applied to a class of noisy young men of the lower ranks of society in the city of New York.

The New York Commercial Advertiser, April 12, 1847, in speaking of the approaching election, uses the following language:—

All the *b'hoys* will vote, aye, more than all. Let every Whig do his duty. Another year with a democratic mayor—and such a mayor as the *b'hoys* would force upon the city! Who can tell what the taxes will be?

Then come every friend of the Union,  
Come old men, and come ye *b'hoys*;  
Let's go it for old Rough and Ready,  
Who never was scared at a noise!—*Political Song.*

**BIBLE CHRISTIANS.** The Philadelphia Mercury thus gives a summary of the creed of this new sect: “This denomination abstain from all animal food and spirituous liquors, and live on vegetables and fruits. They maintain the unity of God, the divinity of Jesus, and the salvation of man, attainable only by a life of obedience to the light manifested to his mind and a grateful acknowledgment of his indebtedness to the great Giver of all. The congregation numbers about seventy members.”

**BIDDABLE.** This Irish word is in use in the West. “White servants are not *biddable*,” that is, manageable, obedient to order.

**BIG.** Great, fine, excellent. The “*big bell*,” the “*big altar*,” and the “*big desk*” of a church, are assuredly big vulgarisms. The “*big horn*,” for the last trumpet, is almost profane.

“Hello!” sez he, “what’s that?”

“That ere,” sez I, “’s some o’ the *biggest* whiskey that ever slipped down a feller’s throat, without smellin’ o’ the customs.”—*N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

**BIG BUGS.** People of consequence.

Then we’ll go to the Lord’s house—I do n’t mean to the meetin’ house, but where the nobles meet, pick out the *big bugs*, and see what sort o’ stuff they’re made of.—*Sam Slick in England*, ch. 24.

These preachers dress like *big bugs*, and go ridin’ about on hundred-dollar horses, a-spungin’ poor priest-ridden folks, and a-eaten chicken-fixens so powerful fast that chickens has got scarce in these diggins.—*Carlton’s New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 140.

The free-and-easy manner in which the hair-brained Sir Robert Peel described some of the *big bugs* at Moscow has got him into difficulty.—*N. Y. Times*, February, 1857.

Miss Samson Savage is one of the *big bugs*—that is, she’s got more money than a’most anybody else in town.—*Bedott Papers*, p. 301.

**BIG DOG.** In some parts of the country the principal man of a place or in an undertaking is called the *big dog with a brass collar*, as opposed to the little curs not thought worthy of a collar.

**BIG DRINK.** 1. A large glass of liquor.

2. A cant term applied, at the South-west, to the Mississippi River.

Well, as I was sayin', off I sot, went through Mississippi, crossed the *big drink*, come too now and then, when the chull come it too strong, but could n't git shut of the ager. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Incident.*

**BIG FIGURE.** To go the *big figure* or do things on the *big figure*, means to do them on a large scale. This vulgar phrase is used at the West and South.

Well, I glory in her spunk, but it's monstrous expensive and unpleasant to do things on the *big figure* that she's on now. — *May. Jones's Courtship.*

**BIG HEAD.** 1. A swelling of the head in cattle.

2. A term used in the West to denote that affection in youth which has recently found a more elegant designation in the term "Young America." It is applied to boys who smoke cigars, chew tobacco, drink strong liquors, gamble, and treat their parents and superiors as their inferiors. Of such a boy it is said, "he has got the *big head*." Also called *swell head*.

**BIG HORN.** (*Ovis montana*.) Another name for the Rocky Mountain Sheep, an animal extensively distributed through North America along the highlands of the Rocky Mountains from California to the parallel of 68°. — *S. F. Baird.*

**BIG MEETING.** Common in the West for "protracted meeting." In country towns where there are no churches and where preachers are seldom seen, the arrival of one is a matter of importance to the whole surrounding region. The people assemble in great numbers and from a distance, and having come so far, one sermon will not suffice; so for several days together religious services are held. This has originally no reference to any especial interest in the hearers, but the transition to the ordinary "protracted meeting" is natural.

**BIGGEST.** Greatest, finest, most excellent; as, "He's the biggest kind of a musician."

The thermal springs are regarded by the trappers as the breathing-places of his Satanic majesty; and considered, moreover, to be the *biggest* kind of medicine to be found in the mountains. — *Ruaton, Life in the Far West*, p. 129.

**BILBERRY.** (*Vaccinium*.) The popular name of shrubs belonging to different species of whortleberry.

**BILING.** A vulgar pronunciation of *boiling*. The phrase *the whole* (or more commonly *hull*) *kit and bilin*, means the whole lot, applied to persons or things.

**BILL-FISH.** (*Belone truncata*.) A small sea-fish fond of running up into fresh water during the summer, and often taken a considerable distance from the ocean. Also called Sea-pike, Silver Gar-fish, etc.

**BILLY.** A weapon used by desperadoes, and sometimes carried by policemen. See *Slung-shot*.

A day or two since a poor German was taken to prison, and, on examining him, it was discovered that he was a victim to the *billy*. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**BIME-BY.** A popular contraction for *by-and-by*. According to Halliwell, it is used in the county of Somerset, England.

O Miss Nancy, do n't you cry;  
Your sweetheart will come *bime-by*.  
When he comes, he 's drest in blue;  
That 's a sign he 'll marry you. — *Children's Song*.

**BINDWEED.** The popular name in Massachusetts for the *convolvulus*. — *Bigelow's Flora*. This term is preferable to the provincial English "Robin run the hedge."

**BINDERY.** A place where books are bound. — *Webster*.

A writer in the Penny Cyclopaedia thinks this a new but not a bad word.

**BIRDS-EYE LIMESTONE.** The name of a formation in the New York system of Geology.

**BISHOP.** An appendage to a lady's wardrobe, otherwise called a Bustle.

I sing the *bishop*, alias the bustle,  
A theme transcendant for a human tongue;  
Prepare, my muse, for a heroic tussle!  
Let every nerve with energy be strung!  
*The Bustle, a Phalos. Poem.*

Mr. Saxe, in his poem on "Progress," says that Imperial Fashion decides the gravest questions which divide the world.

If wrong may not, by circumstance, be right, —  
If black cravats be more genteel than white, —  
If, by her *bishop*, or her "grace," alone,  
A genuine lady, or a church, is known.

**BISON.** See *Buffalo*.

**BIT.** (Span. *pieza*.) The name, in some Southern States, of a silver coin of the value of one eighth of a dollar, the Spanish real (*de plata*). It is called also an *eleven-penny bit* or a *levy*. See the article *Federal Currency*.

**BITTERS.** A liquid or spirituous liquor, containing an infusion of bitter herbs and roots. — *Worcester*.

*Bitters*, before the temperance reform, were much in fashion, taken before breakfast to give an appetite. The custom is now confined to professed tipplers, or to where fever and ague abounds.

What was that I saw you taking for your *bitters*, a little while ago? — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, p. 68.

**BLACK BASS.** 1. A favorite game fish, found in abundance in most of our Northern lakes and Western rivers.

2. On the Jersey coast, this name is also given to the Sea Bass (*Centopristes nigricans*.)

**BLACKBERRY.** This term is universal in the United States for the English Bramble-berry.

**BLACKBERRY BUSH.** Bramble-bush.

**BLACKFISH.** See *Tautaug*.

**BLACKGUM.** (*Genus Nyssa*.) A tree common to the Middle States.

**BLACK JACK.** The *Quercus nigra*, or Barren oak.

**BLACK MAIL.** Formerly, money paid to men allied with robbers to be protected by them from being robbed. — *Cowell*.

In the United States it usually means money extorted from a person by threatening to accuse him of a crime or to oppose him in the public prints. This is called "levying *black mail*."

**BLACKSTRAP.** Gin and molasses. The English sailors call the common wines of the Mediterranean, *blackstrap*. — *Falconer's Marine Dictionary*.

Come, Molly, dear, no *blackstrap* to-night, switchel, or ginger pop. — *Margaret*, p. 300.

Mister, I guess you never drink'd no *blackstrap*, did you? Why, bless you, it's the sweetest drink that ever streaked down a gullet. — *Hull's Yankee Stories*.

Blackstrap in old times was the common beverage of engine companies at fires in Boston, and is thus poetically alluded to by one of her writers :

But oh ! let *blackstrap's* sable god deplore  
Those engine-heroes so renowned of yore !

*Harvard Register*, q. 235.

**BLACKWOOD.** Hemlock, pine, spruce, and fir. Maine.

**BLADDER-TREE.** (*Straphylea*.) A handsome shrub, from six to ten feet high, remarkable for its large inflated capsules. — *Bigelow's Flora Bostoniensis*.

**BLADDER-WORT.** (*Utricularia vulgaris*.) The popular name of an aquatic plant, appearing above water only with its stalk and flowers. — *Ibid*.

**BLANKET.** A term used distinctively for the clothing of an Indian. To say of one's father or mother that they "wore the blanket," implies that they were but half civilized Indians. Western.

**BLANKET COAT.** A coat made from a blanket, common in the West, and often seen with the black stripe of the border of the original blanket



crossing various parts of the garment. Such a coat, of a bright blue, would be deemed a great oddity in the Atlantic States; in the West, a green one would be considered equally ridiculous. See *Mackinaw Blanket*.

**BLANKET INDIAN.** A wild Indian, whose principal article of dress is the blanket.

**BLATHER.** The Irish pronunciation of *bladder*; figuratively, idle, windy talk. Western.

**BLATHERSKITE.** A blustering, noisy, talkative fellow. Though of Scotch origin, the term is much used in the West.

**BLAUSER.** (Dutch, *blazer*, a blower.) The name given by the Dutch settlers to the hog-nosed snake, from its habit of distending or blowing up the skin of its neck and head. The other popular names in New York are Deaf-Adder and Buckwheat-nosed Adder.—*Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**BLAZE.** In traversing the dense forests of the West, a person would soon lose his way and find it difficult to retrace his steps, without some landmark. This is made by cutting a piece out of the side of trees at a sufficient distance from each other to enable the traveller readily to discover them, and thus follow the direct path or road. Such a mark is called a *blaze*, and trees thus marked are said to be *blazed*. "That horse has a *blazed* forehead," meaning a white spot on it.

Three *blazes* in a perpendicular line on the same tree indicating a legislative road, the single *blaze*, a settlement or neighborhood road.—*Carlton, The New Purchase*.

After traversing a broad marsh, however, where my horse seemed loth to venture, I struck a burr-oak opening, and soon found my way by the *blazed* trees back to the mail trail.—*Hoffman, Winter in the West*.

I kept the banks of the bayou, and determined to mark the tree with a *blaze*.—*A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 63.

Do you see that *blaze* in the hemlock tree? Well, he up and as quick as a wink fired and hit it in the centre.—*S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 112.

**TO BLAZE, OR BLAZE OUT.** To designate by blazing (see the preceding article); to mark out.

Champollion died in 1832, having done little more than *blaze* out the road to be travelled by others.—*Noti's Chronology, Ancient and Scriptural*, p. 36.

**BLAZES.** *Like blazes*, that is, furiously.—*Moor's Suffolk Words*.

As they cut away, the company

Still kep upon the glare;

An' when comin' in, the hosses ded

Along *like blazes* tear.—*Poem in Essex Dialect*, p. 21.

This expression is common in low language with us. At the South it seems to be used as a euphemism for *devil*, etc.

I've been serving my country like a patriot, goin' to town-meetings, hurraing my daylight's out, and getting as blue as *blazes*. — *J. C. Neal*.

All the hair was off his head, and his face was as black as the very old *blazes*. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 49.

**BLAZING STAR.** (*Aletris farinosa*.) A plant, the root of which is greatly esteemed by the Indians and people of the West for its medicinal virtues. It is also called Devil's Bit. Both names are also applied to other and very different plants.

**BLICKEY.** (Dutch, *bliek*, tin.) In New York, a tin pail.

**TO BLIND A TRAIL.** To conceal a person's foot-prints, or to give them the appearance of going in a different direction; and, figuratively, to deceive a person by putting him on the wrong track.

**BLIZZARD.** A poser. This word is not known in the Eastern States.

A gentlemen at dinner asked me for a toast; and supposing he meant to have some fun at my expense, I concluded to go ahead, and give him and his likes a *blizzard*. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 16.

**BLOCK.** A term applied in America to a square mass of houses included between four streets. It is a very useful one. The term is used in the London Quarterly Review, Vol. 88, p. 477, in an article on "Sanitary Consolidation."

Such an average *block*, comprising 282 houses and covering nine acres of ground, exists in Oxford street. It forms a compact square mass, or "insula," to borrow a term from the Romans, favorably situated for military engineering.

**BLOOD ROOT.** (*Sanguinaria canadensis*.) The plant is so called from the blood-red juice which exudes from a fresh root when broken. See *Puccoon*.

**BLOOD-TUBS.** A set of rowdies in Baltimore.

**BLOODED.** *Blooded cattle*, or *stock*, is a term applied to horses, horned cattle, swine, etc., of choice breeds.

**BLOUSE.** (French.) A loose frock, made of brown linen, fastened round the waist with a belt; worn by men and boys in France, and lately introduced partially into this country.

**TO BLOW.** To boast, brag; to "talk big." "You *blow* behind my back, but dare not say any thing to my face."

**BLOWER.** 1. A plate of sheet iron, used to partially stop the opening of a grate or furnace, and thus increase the draft.

2. A braggart; a teller of incredible anecdotes, feats, and hairbreadth escapes.

**BLOW OF COTTON.** In the South, the bursting of the pods.

**TO BLOW OUT.** To talk violently or abusively. The pious Uncle Tiff, as related by Mrs. Stowe, wonders how people get to heaven among the conflicting doctrines :

Dere's de Methodists, dey cuts up de Presbyterians ; de Presbyterians pitch into de Methodists, and both are down on de Episcopal's ; while de Baptists tink dey none on dem right ; and while dey's all *blowing out* at each other dat ar way, I's wondering whar's de way to Canaan. — *Dred*, Vol. I., p. 276.

**BLUE.** Gloomy, severe ; extreme, ultra. In the former sense it is applied especially to the Presbyterians, to denote their severe and mortified appearance. Thus, beneath an old portrait of the seventeenth century, in the Woodburn Gallery, is the following inscription :

A true *blue* Priest, a Lincey Woolsey Brother,  
One legg a pulpit holds, a tub the other ;  
An Oithodox grave, moderate Presbyterian,  
Half suplico cloake, half Priest, half Puritan.  
Made up of all these halves, hee cannot pass  
For any thing entirely but an ass.

In the latter sense it is used particularly in politics.

The *bluest* description of old Van Rensselaer Federalists have followed Col. Prentiss (in Otsego county). — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**BLUE.** A synonyme in the tippler's vocabulary for *drunk*. To drink "till all's *blue*," is to get exceedingly tipsy.

**BLUE-BERRY.** (*Vaccinium tenellum*.) A fruit resembling the whortleberry in appearance and taste.

**BLUE-BOOK.** A printed book containing the names of all the persons holding office under the government of the United States, with their place of birth, amount of salary, etc. It answers to the Red-Book of England. This distinction in color was made at the suggestion of Peter Force, Esq., of Washington.

**BLUE CURLS.** (*Trichostema dichotomum*.) From the shape and color of its flowers. A common plant resembling pennyroyal, and hence called bastard pennyroyal.

**BLUE-FISH.** (*Temnodon saltator*.) A salt-water fish of the mackerel order, but larger in size. It is one of the most voracious fishes on the Atlantic coast. It bites readily at any object drawn rapidly through the water ; as a bone squid or metal spoon, a minnow, white rag, and in fact any conspicuous bait. On the Jersey coast, they are called Horse-Mackerel ; and in Virginia, Salt-water Tailors. Another name is the Skipjack. On the Jersey coast, the name *Blue-fish* is applied to the Weakfish, or Squeteauge.

**BLUE-GRASS.** The name of the grass of the rich limestone land of Kentucky and Tennessee. It affords pasture for ten or eleven months in the year, and flourishes in the partial shade of the woods in which there is no undergrowth. The change from the fertile soil upon which this grass flourishes to that which is poorer is sudden and well marked. Hence the term "Blue-Grass" is applied both to the region and its inhabitants. "Grape-vine," for similar reasons, is used in opposition to "Blue-grass," although not with equal propriety, as the vine *does* grow well on either soil, while the blue-grass does not. Sometimes, in opposition to "Blue-grassmen," we have "Mountain men." See *Owen's Geological Survey of Kentucky*.

**BLUE LAWS.** Where and how the story of the New Haven *Blue Laws* originated is a matter of some curiosity. According to Dr. Peters, the epithet *blue* was applied to the laws of New Haven by the neighboring colonies because these laws were thought peculiarly sanguinary; and he says that *blue* is equivalent to *bloody*. It is a sufficient refutation of this account of the matter, to say, that if there was any distinction between the colony of New Haven and the other united colonies of New England in the severity of their punishments, New Haven was the last of the number to gain this bad preëminence. Others have said, that certain laws of New Haven, of a more private and domestic kind, were bound in a blue cover; and hence the name. This explanation has as little probability as the preceding for its support. It is well known, that, on the restoration of Charles II., the Puritans became the subject of every kind of reproach and contumely. Not only what was deserving of censure in their deportment, but their morality, was especially held up to scorn. The epithet *blue* was applied to any one who looked with disapprobation on the licentiousness of the times. The Presbyterians, under which name all dissenters were often included, as they still dared to be the advocates of decency, were more particularly designated by this term; their religion and their morality being marked by it as mean and contemptible. Thus Butler:

For his religion, it was fit  
To match his learning and his wit;  
'T was Presbyterian true *blue*. — *Hudib.* Canto I.

That this epithet of derision should find its way to the colonies was a matter of course. It was here applied not only to persons, but to customs, institutions, and laws of the Puritans, by those who wished to render the prevailing system ridiculous. Hence probably a belief with some, that a distinct system of laws, known as the *Blue Laws*, must have somewhere a local habitation. — *Prof. Kingsley's Hist. Discourse.*

**BLUE LAW STATE.** Connecticut.

**BLUE LIGHTS.** During the war of 1812, while the British fleet lay off New London, blue lights were often seen at night near the shore, which were attributed by Commodore Decatur (whose vessels lay there for security) to persons who were friendly to the British, and hence traitors. The conclusion was an unjust one, as no American was ever discovered or even suspected of burning them. Hence, says Mr. Goodrich, "*Blue lights*, meaning treason on the part of Connecticut Federalists during the war, is a standard word in the flash dictionary of democracy." "Even to this day," he says elsewhere, "Connecticut *Blue Lights* are the grizzly monsters with which the nursing fathers and mothers of democracy frighten their children into obedience—just before elections!" — *Recollections*, Vol. I., p. 439 and 484.

Horace Greeley, and a train of real *blue light* Clayites from your State, have arrived this morning, and make their head-quarters at the Franklin. Horace has fastened on his armor with rivets and hammer, and the Taylor men will find him a regular "barnburner!" — *New York Herald*.

**BLUE-NOSE.** The slang name for a native of Nova Scotia.

"Pray, sir," said one of my fellow passengers, "can you tell me why the Nova Scotians are called '*Blue-Noses*'?"

"It is the name of a potatoe," said I, "which they produce in great perfection, and boast to be the best in the world. The Americans have, in consequence, given them the nickname of *Blue-Noses*." — *Sam Slick*.

Do you know the reason monkeys are no good? Because they chatter all day long,—so do the niggers,—and so do the *Blue-Noses* of Nova Scotia. — *Sam Slick*.

After a run [in the steamer] of fourteen days, we entered the harbor of Halifax, amid the hearty cheers of a large number of *Blue-Noses*. — *Sir George Simpson's Overland Journey*, Vol. I. p. 19.

**BLUE PERCH.** See *Burgall*.

**BLUE-SKINS.** A nickname applied to the Presbyterians, from their alleged grave deportment.

**BLUE-STOCKING.** The American avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*.) A common bird in the Northern States.

**BLUETS.** (*Oldenlandia cærulea*.) A delicate little herb, producing in spring a profusion of light-blue flowers fading to white, with a yellowish eye. — *Gray*.

**BLUFF, n.** A high bank, almost perpendicular, projecting into the sea. — *Falconer's Marine Dic.*

In America it is applied to, 1. A high bank, presenting a steep front along a river, in the interior of the country. Hence it is also used as a

geological term to denote the lacustrine formation where these high banks occur.

Here you have the advantage of mountain, *bluff*, interval, to set off the view. — *Margaret*, p. 282.

## 2. A game of cards.

**BLUFF**, *adj.* Steep, bold; as a hill.

Its banks, if not really steep, had a *bluff* and precipitous aspect, from the tall forest that girded it about — *Margaret*, p. 7.

**TO BLUFF OFF.** To put off a troublesome questioner or dun with a gruff answer; to frighten a person in any way, in order to deter him from accomplishing his ends.

"I goes you five dollas, this time," says Jim, posting at the same time the tin.

"I sees dat, and I goes you ten better," said Bill; "you ain't agoin' to *bluff* dis child, no how you can fix it."

"I sees you again," said Jim, "and goes you forty better; dis Orleans nigger won't stay stumped, dat I tells you, sartin." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

In the course of the dispute Jim let out some offensive remark, which brought a rejoinder from Joe. The former tried the *bluffing system*; but Joe said he had stood enough, and would put up with no more insults from his bullying neighbor. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 137.

**BLUMMECHIES.** (Dutch.) This Dutch word for small flowers is still preserved in the New York markets.

**BLUMMIES.** (Dutch.) Flowers. In the State of New York, and particularly in the city and along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers.

A gentleman, ruralizing along the banks of the Hudson, stopped to pick some wild flowers near where sat an aged man, and said:

"These flowers are beautiful, — it is a treat for one from the city to gaze on them!"

"Flowers?" replied the old man, with an air of bewilderment. "Flowers! what be they?"

"Why, these!" replied I, stooping and picking some.

"O, the *blummies*! Yes, the blummies be very thick hereabouts!" he replied.

*Newspaper.*

**BOARDS.** In the South-west, boards are strips of wood from two to four feet in length riven from blocks, and differing only in size from shingles. All sawed stuff, which at the North is called *boards*, is here called *plank*.

**BOATABLE.** Navigable for boats or small river-craft. — *Webster*. This useful word has only recently been adopted into the English Dictionaries.

The Seneca Indians say, they can walk four times a day from the *boatable* waters of the Alleghany to those of the Tioga. — *Morse's Geography*.

This word, says Dr. Webster, though of modern origin, is well formed according to the English analogies, like *fordable*, *creditable*, etc. The advantage of using it is obvious, as it expresses an important distinction in the capacity of water to bear vessels. *Navigable* is a generic term, of which *boatable* is the species; and as the use of it saves a circumlocution, instead of being proscribed, it should be received as a real improvement. — *Letter to J. Pickering on his Vocabulary*, p. 6.

The objection to this word is, that it is a hybrid, composed of a Saxon noun and a Latin ending. It is like *fordable*, but not like *creditable*, which is all Latin. We would hardly use the word *trustable*.

**BOATING.** Transporting in boats. — *Webster*.

**BOB.** A knot of worms or chicken-guts on a string, used in fishing for eels, and in the South for trout. The bob is frequently made of colored rags, red, black, etc.; and for large trout, it is a bait equivalent to the artificial fly.

**To BOB.** 1. To fish for eels with a bob. This word is common in New England, and is used in the same sense in England.

These are the baits they bob with. — *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

Let others bend their necks at sight

Of fashion's gilded wheels,

He ne'er had learned the art to bob

For any thing but eels. — *Saxe, The Cold Water Man*.

2. To cut short, as the hair. You have been *bobbed*, expresses familiarly that your hair has been cut. This recalls Shakspeare's "bob-tail," "bob-wig."

**BOBOLINK.** (*Icterus agripennis*.) A lively little bird, so called from its notes, which in the fall frequents the wild rice of shallow rivers and marshes, where it becomes very fat. It is highly esteemed by epicures. Other popular names by which it is known in different parts of the country are Rice-bird, Rice-bunting, Reed-bird, Meadow-bird, May-bird, Butterbird, American Ortolan, and, lastly — and most inappropriately — Skunk Blackbird.

The happiest bird of our spring is the *Bobolink*. This is the chosen season of revelry for him. He comes amidst the pomp and fragrance of the season; his life seems all sensibility and enjoyment, all song and sunshine. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*.

Philosophers may teach thy whereabouts and nature,

But wise, as all of us, perforce, must think 'em,

The school-boy best has fix'd thy nomenclature,

The poets, too, must call thee *Bob-o-Linkum*. — *Hoffman, Poems*.

**BOB-SLED.** A sled prepared for the transportation of large timber from the forest to a river or public road. Maine.

**BOCKEY.** (Dutch, *bokaal*.) A bowl or vessel made from a gourd. A term peculiar to the city of New York and its vicinity.

**BOCKING.** A kind of baize or woollen cloth, either plain or stamped with colored figures, used to cover floors or to protect carpets. It is also called *floor-cloth*.

**BODETTE.** (Fr. *beaudette*.) In Canada the common name for a cot-bedstead.

**BOGUS, n.** A liquor made of rum and molasses.

**BOGUS, adj.** Counterfeit, false.

The Boston Courier of June 12, 1857, in reporting a case before the Superior Court in that city, gives the following as the origin of this word: "The word *bogus* is a corruption of the name of one *Borghese*, a very corrupt individual, who, twenty years ago or more, did a tremendous business in the way of supplying the great West, and portions of the South-west, with counterfeit bills and bills on fictitious banks. The Western people fell into the habit of shortening the name of *Borghese* to that of *Bogus*; and his bills, as well as all others of like character, were universally styled by them "*bogus* currency." By an easy and not very unnatural transition, the word is now applied to other fraudulent papers, such as sham mortgages, bills of sale, conveyances, etc.

"Look at these bank-bills," said the stranger; "keep those that are good, and return me the bad."

"I guess the whole pile are *bogus*," said Confidence Bob, as he turned over his roll. — *North, The Slave of the Lamp*, p. 33.

The wide-awake citizens of Boston have been sadly bitten by a *bogus* issue of the old "Pine-Tree Shilling currency," got up by a smart Gothamite. — *American Notes and Queries*, July, 1857.

The Know Nothings of Massachusetts must behave themselves better than they did in their visit to the Catholic nunnery, or they will be repudiated by their brethren in other States, as *bogus* members of the order. — *New York Herald*.

Not one cent should be given to pay the members of the *bogus* legislature of Kansas, or for the support of the *bogus* laws passed by them. — *Boston Atlas*.

**BOIS DE VACHE.** See *Buffalo Chips*.

**BOLIVAR HAT.** A Leghorn bonnet with a broad brim, worn a few years since.

**BOMBO.** An animal of North Carolina, said to resemble the hedgehog, and by some called a Badger.

When the people [of North Carolina] entertain their friends, they fail not to set before them a capacious bowl of *Bombo*, so called from the animal of that name. — *Westover Papers*, p. 28.

**BONES.** Substitutes for castanets, so called from the substance from which they are made. Among "negro minstrels," one is always a performer on these instruments, whence he is styled "*Brudder Bones*."



'T was the finest place for miles around,  
 And ole galls would n't all come down.  
 And they 'd so light on every night  
 To the old banjo's sweet sound.  
 The fiddle there, and den de bones,  
 And de merry tambourine,  
 Oh wish dat I could see again  
 De ole plantation green. — *Negro Melody.*

**BONESET.** (*Eupatorium perfoliatum.*) The popular name of a medicinal plant. Its properties are sudorific and tonic.

**BONNY-CLABBER.** (Irish, *baine*, milk, and *clabar*, mud.) Milk turned sour and thick. It is sometimes called simply *clabber*. The etymology shows that the sense in which the term is used in America is the true and original one, although it is usually explained in dictionaries as meaning "sour buttermilk."

We scorn, for want of talk, to jabber  
 Of parties o'er our *bonny-clabber* ;  
 Nor are we studious to inquire  
 Who votes for manors, who for hire. — *Swift.*

**BONY-FISH.** See *Menhaden*.

**TO BOO-HOO.** To cry aloud, to bawl, bellow, roar.

The little woman *boo-hoo'd* right out, threw herself incontinently full on his breast, hung around his neck, and went on in a surprising way for such a mere artificial as an actress. — *Field, Drama in Pokerville.*

O ye rash and inconsiderate children of iniquity! You will go down to your graves *boo-hooing* like a kicked booby, soul-shattered, body-tattered, looking as though you had made your escape from a regiment of wild cats. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II., p. 277.

**BOOBY HUT.** A carriage body put upon sleigh runners. New England. It is a slight alteration of the term *booby hatch*, used in the east of England to denote a clumsy, ill-contrived covered carriage or seat.

**BOODLE.** "The whole boodle of them," i. e. all, the whole. New England.

**BOOKSTORE.** A place where books are kept and sold. It is the common term in the United States for what is called, in England, a *bookseller's shop*. — *Worcester.*

**BOONDER OR BOUNDER.** A scrubbing-brush. New York.

**TO BOOST.** To lift or raise by pushing. — *Webster.* Chiefly used by Northern boys, who apply it to the act of shoving a person by the posteriors up a tree or over a fence. "*Boost* me up this tree, and I'll hook you some apples."

He clambered back into the box (in the theatre), the manager assisting to *boost* him with the most friendly solicitude. — *Field, Drama in Pokerville.*

I have often noticed the alacrity with which the policemen of New York pilot unprotected females across the street and *boost* them into stages. — *Docsticks*.

It is just as difficult to *boost* a sinner up to heaven without corresponding effort on his part, as it would be for a child to shoulder a sack of Turk's Island salt. — *Dow's Sermons*.

Office-seekers ask you to give them a *boost* into the tree of office. And what do they do? They eat the apples, and then throw the cores at your heads. — *Dow's Sermons*.

Lord Palmerston was *boosted* into power by the agricultural interest of England. — *New York Herald*.

**BOOT-LICK.** One who cringes to and flatters a superior for the purpose of obtaining favors; a lickspittle, a toady.

**BOOTEE.** A kind of short or half boot. — *Worcester*.

**BORN IN THE WOODS.** To say that one was *not born in the woods to be scared by an owl*, means that he is too much used to danger or threats to be easily frightened.

I just puts my finger to my nose, and winks, as much as to say, "I ain't such a cursed fool as you take me to be!" Guess he found that was no go; for I warn't *born in the woods to be scared by an owl*. — *Sam Slick*.

**BOSAAL.** A peculiar kind of halter, used in breaking and riding unruly horses.

**BOSS.** The *o* pronounced like *a* in *all*. (Dutch, *baas*.) A master, an employer of mechanics or laborers. Hence we hear of a *boss*-carpenter, a *boss*-bricklayer, *boss*-shoemaker, etc., instead of master-carpenter, etc. The word probably originated in New York, and is now used in many parts of the United States. The blacks often employ it in addressing white men in the Northern States, as they do *massa* (master) in the Southern States.

At a meeting of the journeymen boot and shoemakers in New York, April 9, 1850, it was

"*Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting that it is very desirable that the boot and shoemakers form an incorporated company for the purpose of securing to its members constant employment and direct patronage of shoe-buyers, and independence from the tyrannical dictation of intermediate capitalists or *bosses*."

It is n't saying much for your *boss* politicianer that he chose you, when I was on his list for promotion — *J. Neal, Peter Brush*.

The Eternal City is in a very curious position. The Pope has returned to his ancestral home; but he has nothing in his pocket, and Rothschild refuses to let him have any more money. A thousand years ago and the boot would have been on t'other leg. . . . To-day it is very different. The Father of Holiness is the dependent of the Jew, and Rothschild is the real Pope and *boss* of all Europe. — *New York Herald*, May 24, 1850.

**BOSS.** (Lat. *bos*.) Among the hunters of the prairies, a name for the buffalo.

To Boss. To rule over ; to direct.

Let his Woman's Rights companion  
 Boss the house and take the money —  
 Boss them and cut off the dead-heads  
 When she made it pay expenses. — *Phuribustah*.

"What detains you at court?" said a lawyer to an unsophisticated countryman attending in a court-room in Arkansas.

"Why, sir," said the countryman, "I'm fatched here as a jury, and they say if I go home they will have to find me, and they mout n't do that, as I live a good piece."

"What jury are you on?" asked a lawyer.

"What jury?"

"Yes, what jury? Grand or traverse jury?"

"Grand or travis jury? Dad-fetched if I know."

"Well," said the lawyer, "did the judge charge you?"

"Well, squire," said he, "the little fellow that sits up in the pulpit and kinder bosses it over the crowd gin us a talk, but I do n't know whether he charged any thing or not."

The crowd broke up in a roar of laughter, and the sheriff called court. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Nov. 3, 1856.

BOSSY. A familiar name applied to a calf. In Dorsetshire, England, a spoilt child is called a *bossy calf*.

BOTTOM. Low land with a rich soil formed by alluvial deposits, and formerly the bottom or bed of a stream or lake. This is an old use of the word. Dr. Johnson defines it, A dale; a valley; a low ground. The distinction is also made between the lowest alluvial lands and those reached only by the highest floods; the latter are known as the "second bottoms."

He stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the *bottom*. — *Zech.* i. 8.

In the *purleus* stands a sheep-cote, west of this place, down in the neighboring *bottom*. — *Shakspeare*.

On both shores of that fruitful *bottom* are still to be seen the marks of ancient edifices. — *Addison on Italy*.

Both the *bottoms* and the high grounds are alternately divided into woodlands and prairies. — *Stoddard's Louisiana*, p. 213.

BOTTOM-LANDS. In the Western States, this name is given to the rich flat land on the banks of rivers, which in New England is generally called 'interval land,' or simply 'interval.' — *Pickering's Vocab.* Webster.

Our sleigh, after winding for some time among this broken ground, and passing over one or two small but beautiful pieces of *bottom-land* among the ravines, reached at last the top of the bluff. — *Hoffman*.

BOUGHTEN. Which is bought. This is a common word in the interior of New England and New York. It is applied to articles purchased from

the shops, to distinguish them from articles of home manufacture. Many farmers make their own sugar from the maple-tree, and their coffee from barley or rye. West India sugar or coffee is then called *boughten sugar*, etc. "This is a home-made carpet; that a *boughten* one;" i. e. one bought at a shop. In the north of England, bakers' bread is called *bought-bread*.

**TO BOUGE.** (Old Fr. *bouge*, swelling. — *Cotgrave*.) To swell out, to bulge. This old word is noticed by Dr. Johnson. It is nearly obsolete in England, but is preserved in the interior of New England.

When the sun gets in one inch, it is ten o'clock; when it reaches the stone that *bouges* out there, it is dinner-time. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

**BOUND.** Determined, resolved. A vulgarism of recent origin.

A handsome nigger's *bound* to shine,  
Like dandy Jim of Caroline. — *Song*.

I'm on the way to be as sombre and solemn as you are, put I'm *bound* to have a good time first. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*.

You see, my buck brethren, that the women are *bound* to get the better of us. If they can't do it in one way, they will in another. In them you behold the wild cat, the lamb, and the dove. They first let loose their untamed feline propensities; next they give the juvenile sheep a trial; and if that fail, they rely upon the loving pigeon. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**BOURBON.** Whiskey from Bourbon county, Kentucky. A term generally used to distinguish the better kinds of whiskey, which are mostly made from corn instead of rye.

**BOW-DARK TREE.** (Fr. *bois d' arc*.) A western tree, the wash of which is used to make bows with.

**BOWIE-KNIFE.** (Pron. *boo-ee*.) A knife from ten to fifteen inches long, and about two inches broad, so named after its inventor, Colonel Bowie. They are worn as weapons by persons in the South and South-western States only, and concealed in the back part of the coat or in the sleeve. Bon Gaultier, in his *American Ballads*, describes a scene in Congress where a young member turning to Mr. Clay asks, "What kind of a Locofoco's that?" alluding to a conspicuous character who had just entered.

"Young man," quoth Clay, "avoid the way of Slick of Tennessee,  
Of gougers fierce, the eyes that pierce, the fiercest gouger he;  
He chews and spits as there he sits, and whittles at the chairs,  
And in his hand, for deadly strife, a *bowie-knife* he bears."

I advise you, one and all, to enter every election district in Kansas, and vote at the point of the *bowie-knife* and revolver. Neither give nor take quarter, as our case demands it. — *Speech of Gen. Stringfellow in the Kansas Legislature*.

There's some men here as I have got to shoot,  
 There's some men here as I have got to stick,  
 Let any on you jest my words dispute,  
 I'll put this *bowie-knife* into him, slick.

*Song of the Border Ruffian.*

**BOWLING-ALLEY.** A place for playing at bowls, or ten pins. In England, long bowling, as described by Strutt, was played on the ground; our game is played on a plank flooring. There were other differences, which it is not necessary to specify, as the American bowling-alleys and games are now well known in England.

**BOWMAN.** A term used in Virginia for a military body-servant.

Each captain and lieutenant was entitled, and I believe is so now, to select from the rank of his company a soldier to wait on him, to carry messages, to cater for him, and to cook for him; and the soldier thus selected was called *bowman*. The term is very ancient, and traces as far back as before the invention of gunpowder and muskets. — *Sketches of Virginia*.

**BOWMAN'S ROOT.** (*Gillenia trifoliata*.) A medicinal plant; also called Indian physic.

**Box.** A boat for duck-shooting. See *Battery*.

**BOX ELDER.** (*Negundo aceroides*.) Sometimes ash-leaved maple.

**Boy.** At the South, the universal name for a black male servant. In Ireland, the word denotes an unmarried man in any menial employment, whatever his age. In many languages, as in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, the same word expresses a male child and a serving-man; just as "girl" and "maid" denote a female servant.

**BRACK.** A break or crack, a flaw. — *Halliwell*. This old word is still used in New England, as it is by early English authors, of a break or flaw in a piece of cloth.

Having a tongue as nimble as his needle, with servile patches of glavering flatery to stitch up the *bracks*, etc. — *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602.

The calico was beautiful, while not a *brack* could be found in it. — *New England Tales*.

**BRANCH.** A brook. Almost every stream in the South is known either as a river, a bayou, or a *branch*; bayou being synonymous with creek, and *branch* with brook. "*Branch-water*" is distinguished from "well-water."

The pasturage of the prairies was scanty and parched; and most of the *branches*, or streams, were dried up. — *W. Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**BRAN-DUSTER.** A sort of bolt in which the bran is freed from adhering flour.

**BRASH.** Brittle. In New England this word is used in speaking of wood or timber that is brittle. In New York it is often heard in the markets, applied to vegetables. Ex. "These radishes are *brash*," i. e. brittle. In many parts of England, twigs are called *brash*.

**BRAVE.** An Indian warrior; a term borrowed from the French.

The Count promised himself many hardy adventures and exploits in company with his youthful *brave*, when we should get among the buffaloes in the Pawnee hunting-grounds — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**BREACHY.** A term applied to unruly oxen in New England, particularly to such as break down fences or through inclosures. It is provincial in the south of England in the same sense.

**BREAD-STUFF.** Bread-corn, meal, or flour; bread. — *Webster, Pickering*. This very useful word is American. Mr. Pickering says, "It was first used in some of the official papers of our government, soon after the adoption of the present Constitution. . . . It has probably been more readily allowed among us, because we do not, like the English, use the word *corn* as a general name for all sorts of grain, but apply it almost exclusively to *Indian corn*, or maize." He cites the following authorities :

The articles of exports . . . are *breadstuffs*, that is to say, bread-grains, meals, and bread. — *Report of the Secretary of State (Mr. Jefferson) on Commercial Restrictions*, Dec. 16, 1793.

One great objection to the conduct of Britain was her prohibitory duty on the importation of *breadstuff*, etc. — *Marshall, Life of Washington*, Vol. V. p. 519.

In Jamaica, the term *bread-kind* is applied to esculent roots, etc., substituted for bread.

**BREAD-ROOT.** (*Psoralea esculenta*.) A plant resembling the beet in form, which is found near the Rocky Mountains, sometimes growing from twenty to thirty inches in circumference. It contains a white pulpy substance, sweet and palatable. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 50.

**BREAK.** A regular sale of tobacco at the "breaking" or opening of the hogsheads. Local in Virginia.

**BREAK-BACK.** A term applied to a peculiar roof, common in the country, where the rear portion is extended beyond the line of the opposite side, and at a different angle. The addition thus acquired is used as a wash-room, a storehouse, or for farming implements.

The house of neighbor B — was a low edifice, two stories in front; the rear being called a *break-back*, that is sloping down to a height of ten feet. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 78.

**BREAK DOWN.** 1. A riotous dance, with which balls are often terminated in the country.

Take up the carpet — move the bed — call the fiddler, and let 's have a regular *break down*. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 60.

Come, hold on, boys, do n't clear out when the quadrilles are over, for we are going to have a *break down* to wind up with. — *New England Tales*.

2. A dance in the peculiar style of the negroes.

**BREAK-BONE FEVER.** A term commonly used to denote the "Dengue," a malarious fever of the South. It is so called either from the "pain in the bones," of which the patients complain, or from the great debility which follows the attack ; both reasons have been assigned for the appellation.

**BREWIS.** In the North of England, a pottage made of slices of bread with fat broth poured over them. — *Halliwel*.

In New England the term is applied to crusts of rye and Indian bread softened with milk and eaten with molasses.

**BRICK IN THE HAT.** "He has got a *brick in his hat*," is an expression applied to an intoxicated person ; meaning he is top-heavy, and cannot walk steady.

**BRICKLEY**, for brittle. Used in Georgia. — *Sherwood's Gazetteer*.

**BRIEF.** Rife, common, prevalent. This word is provincial in England, and is much used by the uneducated in the interior of New England and in Virginia, when speaking of epidemic diseases. It is probably a corruption of *rife*.

**BRIGHT.** Intelligent, quick, having an active mind. A term often applied to children ; as, "Although he has had but little schooling, our Jonathan is a *bright* lad."

**BROADBILL.** (*Anas marila*.) The common name of a wild duck, which appears on our coast in large numbers in October. On the Chesapeake it is called Black-head ; and in Virginia, Raft-duck.

**BROAD-HORN.** A name by which the flat-boats on the Mississippi were formerly known. See *Flat-boat*.

At Wheeling I embarked in a flat-bottomed family boat, technically called a *broad-horn*, a prime river conveyance. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 258.

"Been boating, Ben, since I met you ?" I inquired, after a short pause.

"Well, yes, mostly," answered Ben, deliberately. "Drove a pretty fair business last year ; only sunk one *broad-horn*, and that war snagged on the Mississippi." — *Ben Wilson's Jug Race*.

I'm the man that, single-handed, towed the *broad-horn* over a sand-bar, — the identical infant who girdled a hickory by smiling at the bark ; and if any one denies it, let him make his will and pay the expenses of a funeral. — *Thorp, in Harper's Mag.*

**BROGUES.** (Dutch, *broek*.) Breeches.

[General Von Poffenburgh's] men being thus gallantly arrayed, — those who lacked muskets shouldering spades and pickaxes, and every man being ordered to tuck in his shirt-tail and pull up his *brogues*, etc. — *Knickerbocker*, N. Y.

**BROOM-CORN.** (*Sorghum saccharatum*.) A species of corn which grows from six to eight feet high, from the tufts of which brooms are made. Very different plants are used for this purpose in Europe, and the English broom is as unlike ours as possible.

**BROTHER JONATHAN.** The origin of this term, as applied to the United States, is given in a recent number of the *Norwich Courier*. The editor says it was communicated by a gentleman now upwards of eighty years of age, who was an active participator in the scenes of the Revolution. The story is as follows :

When General Washington, after being appointed commander of the army of the Revolutionary war, came to Massachusetts to organize it and make preparations for the defence of the country, he found a great want of ammunition and other means necessary to meet the powerful foe he had to contend with, and great difficulty to obtain them. If attacked in such condition, the cause at once might be hopeless. On one occasion, at that anxious period, a consultation of the officers and others was had, when it seemed no way could be devised to make such preparation as was necessary. His Excellency Jonathan Trumbull the elder was then governor of the State of Connecticut, on whose judgment and aid the general placed the greatest reliance, and remarked : " We must consult ' Brother Jonathan ' on the subject." The general did so, and the governor was successful in supplying many of the wants of the army. When difficulties afterwards arose, and the army was spread over the country, it became a by-word, *We must consult Brother Jonathan*. The term Yankee is still applied to a portion, but *Brother Jonathan* has now become a designation of the whole country, as John Bull has for England.

**BROWN.** *To do a thing up brown*, is to do it to perfection. A common vulgarity.

Well, I think Ellen's a *doun' it up brown!* There'll be another weddin' soon, I guess. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 57.

**BROWN STONE.** A dark variety of the red sandstone, now so fashionable as a building material, that its imitations in paint and mastic outdo the original in darkness, and rows of houses in some of our cities are now to be seen almost black.

**BROWN THRASHER.** (*Turdus rufus*.) The popular name of the Ferruginous Thrush, called also the Brown Thrush. It is also called the Ground Mocking-bird.

I love the city as dearly as a *brown thrasher* loves the green tree that sheltered its young. — *C. Mathews, Works*, p. 125.

**BROUGHTINS UP.** Bringing up, educating. A vulgar corruption, often used jocously.



I'm a Yankoe, said Slick, and I ain't above ownin' to it, and so are you ; but you seem ashamed of your *broughtens up*, and I must say you are no great credit to them. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 83.

**BRUNG**, for *brought*. Used by ignorant persons, especially by blacks, at the South.

**BRUSH**, for *brushwood*, is an Americanism, and moreover is not confined to undergrowth, but comprises also branches of trees.

**BUB** and **BUBBY**. Contractions for brother, often applied to small boys.

**BUBBLER**. A fish found in all the waters of the Ohio River. Its name is derived from the singular grunting noise which it makes, a noise which is familiar to every one who has been much on the Ohio. — *Flint's Mississippi Valley*.

**BUCK**. A frame or stand of peculiar construction, on which wood is sawn for fuel. In New England it is called a Saw-horse.

**BUCK**. A "*buck nigger*" is a term often vulgarly applied to a negro man. Western. So in London, a "*buck sweep*," among the populace.

**To BUCK**. Used instead of *butt*, applied to animals pushing with their head and horns, and metaphorically of players at football and such games, pugilists, etc. Comp. *Bunt*.

**BUCK BEER**. (German, *bock bier*.) The strongest kind of German beer, said to be so called from causing the drinker to caper like a goat (*bock*). It is, of course, intoxicating.

**BUCKET**. The term is applied, in the South and West, to all kinds of pails and cans holding over a gallon.

**BUCKEYE**. 1. (*Æsculus glabra*.) A small tree growing on the river banks from West Pennsylvania and Virginia to Michigan and Kentucky, the bark of which exhales an unpleasant odor. Other species have the same name.

2. A native of the State of Ohio, in which the *Æsculus glabra* abounds.

**BUCKEYE STATE**. The State of Ohio ; so called from the Buckeye-tree, which abounds there.

**BUCK FEVER**. Agitation of inexperienced hunters, caused by seeing a deer, or other large game.

Smith blazed away at the deer ; but where the ball went, mercy knows. The animal dashed forward and went crashing up the hill-side. Smith acknowledged to a severe attack of the *buck fever*. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 127.

**BUCK-FLY.** An insect which torments the deer at certain seasons.

**BUCKRA.** A white man. A term universally applied to white men by the blacks of the African coast, the West Indies, and the Southern States. In the language of the Calabar coast, *buckra* means devil; not, however, in the sense we apply to it, but that of a demon, a powerful and superior being. The term *swanga buckra*, often used by the blacks, means an elegantly dressed white man or dandy. I am indebted to the Rev. J. L. Wilson, who is familiar with the African language alluded to, for the etymology of this word.

Which country you like best? *Buckra* country very good, plenty for yam (food), plenty for bamboo (clothing). *Buckra* man book larn *Buckra* man rise early,—he like a cold morning; nigger no like cold.—*Carmichael's West Indies*, Vol. I. p. 311.

Great way off at sea,  
When at home I binny,  
*Buckra* man take me  
From de coast ob Guinea.—*Song*.

**BUCKSKINS.** A term applied to the American troops during the Revolutionary war.

Cornwallis fought as long 's he dought,  
An' did the *buckskins* claw him.—*Burns*.

**BUCKTAILS.** The name of a political party in the State of New York, which sprung up about the year 1815. Its origin is thus described by Mr. Hammond: "There was an order of the Tammany Society who wore in their hats, as an insignia, on certain occasions, a portion of the tail of the deer. They were a leading order, and from this circumstance the friends of DeWitt Clinton gave those who adopted the views of the members of the Tammany Society, in relation to him, the name of *Buck-tails*; which name was eventually applied to their friends and supporters in the country. Hence the party opposed to the administration of Mr. Clinton were for a long time called the "**BUCKTAIL PARTY**."—*Polit. Hist. of New York*, Vol. I. p. 450.

That beer and those *bucktails* I never forget;  
But oft, when alone and unnoticed by all,  
I think, Is the porter-cask foaming there yet,  
Are the *bucktails* still swigging at Tammany Hall?

*Halleck's Fanny.*

**BUFFALO.** 1. (*Bison americanus*.) This, the most gigantic of the indigenous mammalia of America, once overspread the entire Northern half of the American continent. At the time of the discovery by the Spaniards, an inhabitant even down to the shores of the Atlantic, it has been beaten back by the westward march of civilization, until, at the present day, it is only after passing the giant Missouri and the head-

waters of the Mississippi, that we find the American Bison or *Buffalo*. — *S. F. Baird*.

The term *buffalo* is often used independently for "buffalo robe," whence a story is told of two Englishmen just arrived at Boston. They ordered a sleigh, having heard of such a thing in a general way, without being conversant with the particulars. "Will you have one *buffalo* or two?" asked the hostler. "Why," said the Cockney, looking a little frightened, "we'll have only one the first time, as we're not used to driving them!"

He tears along behind him a sleigh of the commonest construction, furnished with an ancient and fragmentary *buffalo*, which serves for robe and cushion both. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 17.

2. A sort of fresh water fish resembling the Sucker. It is found in the Mississippi and other Southern rivers.

**BUFFALO CHIPS.** The dry dung of the buffalo, used for fuel on the prairies, and hence called by the French *bois de vache*. The dung of cattle is extensively used for the same purpose in other parts of the world. In Armenia, according to Mr. Curzon, it is collected from the cattle-yards and mixed with chopped straw by tramping on it with the naked feet while it is in a moist state. It is then cut into square blocks and treasured up for winter's use, forming the exclusive fuel, under the name of *tezek*, for all classes. In Thibet it is used under the name of *arghol*. Huc, in his travels in Mongolia, describes its use there. In fact, throughout all Tartary or Turkestan, where there is a deficiency of wood, this article is in universal use for fuel. On the woodless plains of Texas, New Mexico, and Chihuahua we were compelled to use dry cattle-dung for fuel, gathering it up near the springs where we encamped. I saw the Pueblo Indians using it in large heaps in baking their pottery, although wood was accessible. It makes no smoke, gives out a great heat, and lasts longer than wood.

**BUFFALO CLOVER.** (*Trifolium reflexum* and *stoloniferum*.) The Western species of clover.

**BUFFALO GRASS.** (*Sesleria dactyloides*.) A species of short grass from two to four inches high, covering the boundless prairies on which the buffaloes feed. A remarkable characteristic of some varieties of this grass is that "the blade, killed by the frost of winter, is resuscitated in spring, and gradually becomes green from the root up, without casting its stubble or emitting new shoots."

**BUFFALO NUT.** (*Pyrolaria oleifera*.) Oil nut. Western.

**BUFFALO-ROBE.** The skin of the buffalo, dressed for use.

Not having time to robe myself exactly for a daylight street walk, I donned a *buffalo-robe*, slipped on my boots, and put out. — *Life on the Prairies*.

**BUFFALO WALLOW.** A term used on the prairies to designate a sink made by the buffalo's pawing the earth for the purpose of obtaining a smooth, dusty surface to roll upon. — *Gregg, Com. of the Prairies*, Vol. II. p. 37.

**BUFFER.** This name is still applied, in the rural parts of New England, to a three-cornered cupboard.

**BUG.** In the United States, coleopterous insects are generally called *bugs*; thus May bug, June bug, Golden bug, etc. In England they are called *beetles*, and the word *bug* is restricted to the species found in bedding. The Spanish word *chinch* is in more general use at the South.

**BUGGY.** A light waggon for one or two horses.

Lend me a hundred and buy yourself a *buggy*, — why do n't you get a *buggy*, to begin with? — *J. C. Neal's Sketches*.

The day is warm, and very muggy,  
And Mr Sled he has a notion  
That he will take the horse and *buggy*  
And Mrs. Sled, to see the ocean.

*Shillaber, Poems.*

**BUGLE-WEED.** (*Lycopus virginicus*.) A plant which has much reputation for its medicinal properties. It is also known as the Virginian Water-horehound.

**TO BUILD A FIRE**, instead of *to make a fire*, is a common phrase, originating, probably, in the backwoods, where large fires are made of logs piled one above the other.

**TO BUILD UP.** To erect; and metaphorically, to establish.

In this manner it was thought we should sooner *build up* a settlement, as the phrase goes. In America, the reader should know, every thing is *built*. The priest *builds up* a flock; the speculator, a fortune; the lawyer, a reputation; and the landlord, a settlement. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*.

Mr. R. has never done any thing to the *Couier and Enquirer* to make them hunt him down or cast ridicule on him, while endeavoring to *build up* for himself an unsullied character among his fellow men. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1848.

**BULGER.** Something uncommonly large, a whopper. Western.

We soon came in sight of New York; and a *bulger* of a place it is. — *Crockett*, p. 37.

**BULL.** A stock-exchange term for one who buys stock on speculation for time, i. e. agrees with the seller, called a "bear," to take a certain sum of stock at a future day at a stated price; if at that day stock fetches more than the price agreed on, he receives the difference; if it falls or is

cheaper, he either pays it, or becomes a "lame duck." This description of a *bull*, from Grose's Slang Dictionary, corresponds precisely with the *bulls* of Wall street, who speculate in stocks in the same manner. See *Lame Duck* and *Bear*.

There was a *sauve qui peut* movement to-day in the stock market, and the clique of *bulls*, finding it impossible to stem the rush, gave up the attempt to sustain the market, and let things go down with a run. . . . Such a state of the market as is now exhibited is nearly as bad for the bears as the *bulls*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 10, 1845

**BULL-BAT.** Night-hawk ; whippoorwill. A gang of blackguard boys in Washington City have adopted this very appropriate name.

**BULL BRIAR, BAMBOO BRIAR.** A large briar in the alluvial bottoms of the South-west, the root of which contains a farinaceous substance from which the Indians make bread.

**BULL-NUT.** A large kind of hickory-nut.

**BULLION STATE.** The State of Missouri ; so called in consequence of the exertions made by its Senator, Mr. Benton, in favor of a gold and silver currency, in opposition to banks and a paper currency. The honorable Senator was hence often nicknamed *Old Bullion*, and the State he represented, the *Bullion State*.

At the Democratic meeting in New York, June 12, 1848, to ratify the nomination of Gen. Cass, the Hon. James Bowlin, of Missouri, in denouncing the Whig party, said :

I deny that the election of 1840 was carried by the people. It was carried by duplicity. It was carried by the unfortunate state of the times, which was not the result of democratic rule, and by false charges against the American democracy ; and, thank God, in my own State, in the *Bullion State*, they did not succeed in depreciating our majority. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 13, 1848.

**BULL'S-EYE.** A small and thick old-fashioned watch.

**BULLY, adj.** Fine, capital. A low word, used in the same manner as the English use the word *crack* ; as, "a *bully* horse," "a *bully* picture."

The *bully* "Crystal Palace" passed up to St. Louis on Monday. We have no doubt she left papers. — *Cairo City Times*.

**BUMBLE-BEE.** An old English name applied to all the species of *Bombus*, which are very numerous in the New as well as in the Old World.

Mr. Goodrich, in his "Reminiscences," describes a religious meeting in a field, where his attention was attracted to the extraordinary evolutions of a man, who was jumping and slapping himself with a ferocious agony of exertion, and adds, —

At first I thought he was mad ; but the truth flashed upon me that he had buttoned up a *bumble-bee* in his pantaloons ! — Vol. I. p. 185.

Disappointment carries a sting in its tail as well as a *bumble-bee*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**BUMPER.** That part of the frame of a railroad car which is provided with springs for an elastic material to meet the shock of the similar part of the next car. In England they use the words *buffer* and *bunter*.

**BUNCH GRASS.** A species of *Festuca* which grows on the plains of New Mexico.

**TO BUNDLE.** Mr. Grose thus describes this custom: "A man and woman lying on the same bed with their clothes on; an expedient practised in America on a scarcity of beds, where, on such occasions, husbands and parents frequently permitted travellers to *bundle* with their wives and daughters." — *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*.

The Rev. Samuel Peters, in his "General History of Connecticut," (London, 1781,) enters largely into the custom of bundling as practised there. He says: "Notwithstanding the great modesty of the females is such, that it would be accounted the greatest rudeness for a gentleman to speak before a lady of a garter or leg, yet it is thought but a piece of civility to ask her to *bundle*." The learned and pious historian endeavors to prove that *bundling* was not only a Christian custom, but a very polite and prudent one.

The Rev. Andrew Barnaby, who travelled in New England in 1759–60, notices this custom, which then prevailed. He thinks that though it may at first "appear to be the effects of grossness of character, it will, upon deeper research, be found to proceed from simplicity and innocence." — *Travels*, p. 144.

Van Corlear stopped occasionally in the villages to eat pumpkin-pies, dance at country frolics, and *bundle* with the Yankee lasses. — *Knickerbocker*, New York.

Bundling is said to be practised in Wales. Whatever may have been the custom in former times, I do not think *bundling* is now practised anywhere in the United States.

Mr. Masson describes a similar custom in Central Asia: "Many of the Afghan tribes have a custom in wooing similar to what in Wales is known as *bundling-up*, and which they term *namzat bazé*. The lover presents himself at the house of his betrothed with a suitable gift, and in return is allowed to pass the night with her, on the understanding that innocent endearments are not to be exceeded." — *Journeys in Beloochistan, Afghanistan, etc.* Vol. III. p. 287.

**BUNCOME,** } Judge Halliburton, of Nova Scotia, thus explains this very  
**BUNKUM.** } expressive word, which is now as well understood as any in  
our language: "All over America, every place likes to hear of its  
member of Congress, and see their speeches; and if they do n't, they

send a piece to the paper, inquire' if their members died a natural death, or was skivered with a bowie knife, for they hante seen his speeches lately, and his friends are anxious to know his fate. Our free and enlightened citizens don't approbate silent members; it don't seem to them as if Squashville, or Punkinsville, or Lumbertown was right represented, unless Squashville, or Punkinsville, or Lumbertown makes itself heard and known, ay, and feared too. So every feller, in bounden duty, talks, and talks big too, and the smaller the State, the louder, bigger, and fiercer its members talk. Well, when a crittur talks for talk sake, jist to have a speech in the paper to send to home, and not for any other airthly puppus but electioneering, our folks call it *Bunkum*."

The origin of the phrase, "talking for Buncombe," is thus related in Wheeler's History of North Carolina: "Several years ago, in Congress, the member from this district arose to address the House, without any extraordinary powers, in manner or matter, to interest the audience. Many members left the hall. Very naively he told those who remained that they might go too; he should speak for some time, but 'he was only talking for *Buncombe*.'"

Mr. Goodrich, in his pleasant "Reminiscences," in describing his native valleys, says:

On every side the ear was saluted by the mocking screams of the red-headed woodpecker, the cawing of congresses of crows, clamorous as if talking to *buncombe*. — Vol. I. p. 101.

Mr. Saxe, in his poem on "Progress," speaking of the Halls of Congress, says:—

Here, would-be Tullys pompously parade  
 Their tumid tropes for simple *buncombe* made,  
 Full on the chair the chulling torrent shower,  
 And work their word-pumps through the allotted hour.  
 Come on, ye stump men eloquent, in never-ending stream,  
 Let office be your glorious goal, and *bunkum* be your theme;  
 The vast and vaulted capital shall echo to your jaws,  
 And universal Yankeedom shall shout in your applause.

*Am. Rejected Addresses, The American Congress.*

The House of Representatives broke down upon the corruption committee's bill to protect the integrity of members of Congress, having first passed it for *buncombe*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 2, 1857.

Here is an amusing biography of Gen. Houston, bulky in size, capital in paper, and evidently got up for *buncombe*. — *New York Tribune*.

Our people talk a great deal of nonsense about emancipation, but they know it's all *buncombe*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 175.

**BUNGO.** A kind of boat used at the South.

The most urgent steps were being taken to press every *bungo* and canoe to the

immediate relief of the people along the coast, in order to embark them without delay. — *N. O. Picayune*.

**BUNGDOWN COPPER.** A spurious coin, of base metal, a very clumsy counterfeit of the English halfpenny or copper. It derived its name from the place where it was first manufactured, then called *Bungtown*, now Barneyville, in the town of Rehoboth, Mass. The *Bungtown copper* never was a legal coin. The British halfpenny or copper was. The term is used only in New England.

These flowers would n't fetch a *Bungtown copper*. — *Margaret*, p. 19.

Anti-slavery professions just before an election ain't worth a *Bungtown copper*. — *Biglow Papers*, p. 147.

The last thing I remember [having been tipsy] was trying to pay my fare with a *Bungtown-copper*. — *Doesticks*, p. 62.

**BUNK.** 1. (Ang. Sax. *benc*, a bench, a form.) A wooden case, used in country taverns and in offices, which serves alike for a seat during the day and for a bed at night. The name is also applied to the tiers of standing bed-places used in the lowest class of lodging-houses.

Dr. Jamieson has the word *bunker*, a bench or sort of low chests, that serve for seats — also, a seat in the window, which serves for a chest, opening with a hinged lid. — *Etym. Dict. Scottish Language*.

Others frae off the *bunkers* sank,

We e'en like the collops scor'd. — *Ramsay's Poems*, Vol. I. p. 280.

In some parts of Scotland, a *bunker* or *bunkart*, which Dr. Jamieson thinks to be the same word, means an earthen seat in the fields. In the North of England, a seat in front of a house, made of stones or sods, is called a *bink*.

2. A piece of wood placed on a lumberman's sled to enable it to sustain the end of heavy pieces of timber. — *Maine*.

**TO BUNK.** To retire to bed in a bunk.

**BUNKUM.** See *Buncome*.

**TO BUNT.** To push with the horns, to butt. Used also in the West of England.

**BUREAU.** 1. The name commonly given, in America, to a chest of drawers.

2. A subdivision of one of the government departments, as the "Indian Bureau," the "Pension Bureau," etc.

**BURGALOO.** (Fr. *Virgalieu*.) A superior kind of pear.

**BURGALL.** (*Otenolabrus ceruleus*.) A small fish, very common in New York; also found on the coast of New England, and as far south as Delaware Bay. The usual length is about six inches, though they are sometimes found twelve inches. Other names for the same fish are Nib-



bler, from its nibbling off the bait when thrown for other fishes; Chogset, the Indian name; and in New England, those of Blue Perch and Conner.

**BURGEE.** A large flag at the mast-head of a merchant-man.

Her masts were lofty, with sails furl'd, and a large *burgee* was streaming out from the topmast-head. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 73.

**TO BURN UP.** In correct English, papers, haystacks, briars, etc., are burned up. The grass is also said to be burned up by drought; but it is hardly proper to say, that such a man was ruined by being *burned up*. "Mr. Smith's factory was *burned up*," it should be "burned down;" and, applied to a man, "burned out."

**BURR-OAK.** (*Quercus macrocarpa*.) A beautiful tree, more than sixty feet in height, laden with dark tufted foliage. It is found mostly beyond the Alleghanies, in the fertile districts of Kentucky and West Tennessee, and in Upper Louisiana near the Missouri. It is also called Overcup White Oak. — *Michaux*.

The trees, with very few exceptions, were what is called the *burr-oak*, a small variety of a very extensive genus; and the spaces between them, always irregular and often of singular beauty, have obtained the name of "openings." — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

**BURR-STONE.** A species of silex or quartz occurring in amorphous masses, partly compact, but containing many irregular cavities. It is used for mill-stones. — *Cleveland's Mineralogy*.

**BURSTED.** A form of the past tense and participle frequently employed instead of the correct form, *burst*.

**BUSH.** (Dutch, *bosch*, a wood.) The woods, a forest, or a thicket of trees or bushes. This term, which is much used in the Northern States and Canada, probably originated in New York.

**BUSH-BEAN.** (*Phaseolus vulgaris*.) The useful vegetable, brought originally from Asia and long cultivated in Europe, called in England Kidney-bean and French Bean. With us they are also called String-beans and Snap-beans, or Snaps.

**BUSHWHACKER.** 1. One accustomed to beat about or travel through bushes; a clod-hopper, raw countryman, green-horn.

Do you think all our eastern dignitaries combined could have compelled young *bushwhackers* to wear coats and shoes in recitation rooms? — *Carlton, New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 87.

The Van B——s of Nyack were the first that did ever kick with the left foot; they were gallant *bushwhackers*, and hunters of raccoons by moonlight. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

Every *bushwhacker* and forest ranger thought he knew where to find the trees. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 15.

2. A scythe or other instrument used for cutting brush or bushes.

I know not the victim soon destined to fall before the keen-edged *bushwhacker* of Time, or I would point him out. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

**BUSHWHACKING.** Travelling or pulling through bushes.

The propelling power of the keel-boat is by oars, sails, setting-poles, the cordelle, and, when the waters are high and the boat runs on the margin of the bushes, *bushwhacking*, or pulling up by the bushes — *Flint's Hist. and Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

**BUST.** 1. A burst, failure. The following conundrum went the rounds of the papers at the time the Whig party failed to elect Mr. Clay to the presidency: "Why is the Whig party like a sculptor? Because it takes Clay, and makes a *bust*."

2. A frolic; a spree. Vulgar.

And when we get our pockets full  
Of this bright, shinin' dust,  
We'll travel straight for home again,  
And spend it on a *bust* — *California Song*.

**TO BUST.** To burst; to fail in business. This vulgar pronunciation of the word *burst* is very common.

I was soon fotch'd up in the victualling line — and I *busted* for the benefit of my creditors. — *J. C. Neal, Dolly Jones*.

When merchants fondly trust to paper,  
And find too late that banks betray,  
What art can help them through the scrape, or  
Suggest the means wherewith to pay?

The only way to stop each croaker,  
And pay the banks to whom they trust;  
To bring repentance to the broker,  
And wing his bosom, is "to *bust*." — *N. Y. Evening Post*.

**BUSTER.** 1. A roistering blade, a dashing fellow.

I went on, learning something every day, until I was reckoned a *buster*, and allowed to be the best bar-hunter in my district. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

2. A frolic, a spree.

**BUTCHER-BIRD.** See *Nine-killer*.

**BUTT.** 1. The small pipe affixed to the hose of a fire-engine.

2. The buttocks. The word is used in the West in such phrases as, "I fell on my *butt*," "He kick'd my *butt*." In the West of England it denotes a buttock of beef.

**TO BUTT.** To oppose. South-west.

**BUTTE.** (French.) This word is of frequent occurrence in books that

relate to the Rocky Mountain and Oregon regions, "where," says Col. Frémont, "it is naturalized, and if desirable to render into English, there is no word which would be its precise equivalent. It is applied to the detached hills and ridges which rise abruptly, and reach too high to be called hills or ridges, and not high enough to be called mountains. *Knob*, as applied in the Western States, is their most descriptive term in English; but no translation or paraphrasis would preserve the identity of these picturesque landmarks."—*Exped. to the Rocky Mountains*, p. 145.

Sir Geo. Simpson, in his "Overland Journey round the World," when traversing the Red River country, west of Hudson's Bay, speaks of a conspicuous landmark in the sea of plains, known as the *Butte aux Chiens*, . . . towering with a height of about four hundred feet over a boundless prairie as level and smooth as a pond.—Vol. I. p. 54.

On entering the broken ground, the creek turns more to the westward, and passes by two remarkable *buttes* of a red conglomerate, which appear at a distance like tables cut in the mountain side.—*Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 241.

**BUTTER-BIRD.** See *Bobolink*.

**BUTTERNUT.** (*Juglans cinerea*.) The tree resembles the black walnut, yet the wood is sometimes called white walnut.

**BUTTONING UP.** A Wall street phrase. When a broker has bought stock on speculation and it falls suddenly on his hands, whereby he is a loser, he keeps the matter to himself, and is reluctant to confess the ownership of a share. This is called *buttoning up*.—*A Walk in Wall Street*, p. 47.

**BUTTON BUSH.** (*Oephalanthus occidentalis*.) A shrub which grows along the water side, its insulated thickets furnishing a safe retreat for the nests of the blackbird. Its flowers appear at a distance like the balls of the sycamore tree; hence its name.—*Bigelow, Flora Bostoniensis*.

**BUTTONWOOD OR BUTTON TREE.** (*Platanus occidentalis*.) The popular name, in New England, of the sycamore tree; so called from the balls it bears, the receptacle of the seeds, which remain on the trees during the winter.—*Michaux's Sylva*. Sometimes called Button-ball tree.

**BUYER'S OPTION.** A purchaser of stocks at the broker's board, *buyer's option*, thirty, sixty, or ninety days, can call for the stock any day within that time, or wait until its expiration. He pays interest at the rate of six per cent. up to the time he calls. A purchase on *buyer's option* is generally a fraction above the cash price.—*Hunt's Merchants Mag.*, Vol. 37.

**BUZZARD.** A name given to several kinds of hawks indigenous to America, as the Black-Buzzard (*Falco harlani*), the Red-tailed Hawk or Buzzard (*Falco borealis*), and the Short-winged Buzzard, or Great Hen-Hawk (*Falco buteoides*). See also *Turkey-Buzzard*.

**BY AND AGAIN.** Occasionally, now and then. A Southern expression.

**BY-BIDDER.** A person employed at public auctions to bid on articles put up for sale, to enhance the price.

**BY THE NAME OF.** Some persons will say, "I met to-day a man *by* the name of Smith." An Englishman would say "*of* the name," etc.; except in such phrases as "He went *by* the name of Smith."

## C.

**CABBAGE-TREE.** (*Palma altissima*.) A palm tree found in East Florida. From its pith very good sago is made, and its long trunks serve for pipes to convey water underground. — *Bartram's Florida Journal*.

**CABERES.** (Span. *cabestro*, a halter.) A rope made of hair, used for catching wild horses and cattle. It is used in the same manner as the "lariat," which is made of raw hide. These two words are in common use in Louisiana and Texas, and imply what is, at the North, termed a *lasso*.

Bill Stone had his rifle for himself and a strong *caberos* for his horse, and so did n't bother anybody about feeding. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

**CABOODLE.** The whole *caboodle* is a common expression, meaning the whole lot. I know not the origin of the word. It is used in all the Northern States and New England. The word *boodle* is used in the same manner.

They may recommend to the electors of Hamilton county to disregard so much of the law as constitutes two election districts of Hamilton county. Having done this, Medary will be looking out for a job; Olds will be often in Fairfield cozening for a nomination to Congress; and the *whole caboodle* will act upon the recommendation of the Ohio Sun, and endeavor to secure a triumph in the old fashion way. — *Ohio State Journal*.

**CACAO.** The fruit of the cacao-tree (*Theobroma cacao*), of which chocolate is made; hence also called Chocolate-nuts, commonly spelled and pronounced Cocoa.

**CACHE.** (French.) A hole in the ground for hiding and preserving provisions which it is inconvenient to carry. Travellers across the prairies, hunters, and the settlers in the far West, often resort to this means for preserving their provisions. In the author's journey to California, owing

to the loss of animals, the contents of a wagon were *cached* on the banks of the Gila, and camp-fires built over the opening, that the Indians might not discover it. It was opened the following year, and every thing found in good order.

I took advantage of a detached heap of stones, to make a *cache* of a bag of pemmican. — *Back, Journal of an Arctic Voyage.*

The *cache*, which I had relied so much upon, was entirely destroyed by the bears. — *Dr. Kane, Arctic Explorations, Vol. I.*

**TO CACHE.** To hide or conceal in the ground.

We returned to camp and *cached* our meat and packs in the forks of a cotton-wood tree out of reach of wolves. — *Ruxton's Adventures in New Mexico.*

When Dr. Hovey's party reached Mann's Fort, they were wellnigh exhausted. The fort was vacant, but after much search they found plenty of salt pork, which had been *cached* by its former occupants. — *New York Tribune.*

**CACHUNK!** A word like *thump!* describing the sound produced by the fall of a heavy body. Also written *kerchunk!* A number of fanciful onomatopoeic words of this sort are used in the South and West; in all of which the first syllable, which is unaccented, is subject to the same variety of spelling. These words are of recent origin.

**CACIQUE, or CAZIQUE.** (W. Ind. *cazic, cachic.*) A chief, or king, among the aborigines of the West India Islands. This, like other terms of the sort, has been extended by the whites beyond its original limits.

**CACOMITE.** A name for the bulbous root of a species of *Tigridia* from which a good flour is prepared, in Mexico.

**CAHOOT.** (Perhaps Fr. *cohorte*, a company, band.) It is used in the South and West to denote a company, or partnership.

Pete Hopkins aint no better than he should be, and I would n't swar he was n't in *cahoot* with the devil. — *Chronicles of Pineville.*

I'd have no objection to go in *cahoot* with a decent fellow for a character, but have no funds to purchase on my own account. — *New Orleans Picayune.*

The hoosier took him aside, told him there was a smart chance of a pile on one of the [card] tables, and that if he liked he would go in with him — in *cahoot!* — *Field, Western Tales.*

**TO CAHOOT.** To act in partnership.

Comodore Morgan sells out his interest to Com. Garrison in the Nicaragua line, and Garrison settles his difficulties with Com. Vanderbilt, and they all agree to *cahoot* with their claims against Nicaragua and Costa Rica. — *New York Herald, May 20, 1857.*

**CALABASH.** 1. A large gourd, the fruit of the *Cucurbita lagenaria*, or calabash vine.

2. (*Crescentia cujete.*) A gourd that grows upon trees in Spanish America and the West Indies. The fruit is large and round, and serves

for bowls. That of another species or variety is oval, and furnishes drinking-cups and chocolate-cups. In South America, the name is *Totuma*; in Central America, *Jicara*; and in Cuba, *Guira*.

3. A humorous name for the head, generally implying emptiness; as, "he broke his *calabash*."

**CALABOOSE.** (Fr. *calabouse*, Span. *calabozo*.) In the South-western States, the common jail or prison.

There's no peace in a steamer, it is nothing but a large *calaboose* chock full of prisoners. — *Sam Slick*, *Human Nature*.

**TO CALABOOSE.** To imprison. South-western.

We have a special telegraphic despatch from St. Louis, giving the information that Col. Titus, late of Nicaragua, now claiming to be of Kansas, was *calaboused* on Tuesday for shooting at the porter of the Planters' House. — *Cincinnati Commercial*, 1857.

**CALASH.** (Fr. *calèche*.) 1. A two-wheeled carriage, resembling a chaise, used in Canada.

2. A covering for the head, usually worn by ladies to protect their headdresses when going to evening parties, the theatre, etc. It is formed of hoops after the manner of a chaise-top, and is in England, very appropriately, called an *ugly*.

**TO CALCULATE.** This word, which properly means to compute, to estimate, has been erroneously transferred from the language of the counting-house to that of common life, where it is used for the words to esteem; to suppose; to believe; to think; to expect; intend, etc. It is employed in a similar way to the word *guess*, though not to so great an extent. Its use is confined to the illiterate of New England.

Mr. Cram requested those persons who *calculated* to join the singin' school to come forward. — *Krickerbocker Mag.* Vol. XVII.

**CALF-KILL.** (*Kalmia angustifolia*.) A plant, so called from its poisonous properties, which are, however, not so great as the name imports. Also called Lamb-kill and Sheep Laurel.

**CALIBOGUS.** Rum and spruce-beer. An American beverage. — *Grose*.

**CALICO.** The word was originally applied to white cottons from India. In England, white cotton goods are still called *calicoes*. In the United States, the term is applied exclusively to printed cotton cloth.

**CALL.** An invitation from the vestry of a church to a clergyman to occupy their pulpit is technically termed a *call*, the loudness of which call is considered to be in a direct ratio to the salary offered.

The renowned Mr. Dow, Jr., at the close of one of his sermons, said:

I have observed that a great many country people have lately joined my congregation. Let the good work go on! I hope to coax a few more such sheep into my fold before I preach my farewell sermon; and that may be pretty soon, as I have had a loud \$600 *call* elsewhere. — *Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 317.

**CALLITHUMPIANS.** It was a common practice in New York, as well as other parts of the country, on New Year's eve, for persons to assemble with tin horns, bells, rattles, and similar euphonious instruments, and parade the streets, making all the noise and discord possible. This party was called the *Callithumpians*, or the *Callithumpian band*. Fortunately the custom has now fallen almost, if not entirely, into disuse.

**CALL-LOANS.** Loans on call are loans of money where the borrower obligates himself to pay at any moment when called for. Banks having large deposits which are liable to be called for any day, often loan money at less than the ordinary rates in this way to brokers.

To speculate in fancy stocks on *call loans* is simply to put your hand in the lion's mouth, or yourself in the hands of a Shylock, with the expectation of getting out without being fleeced. — *New York Herald*.

**CALLS.** Operations of this kind are made generally by those "curb-stone brokers" who are under the impression that higher prices will soon rule in certain stocks. A speculator is desirous of making a little operation, and he offers to give \$50 for the privilege of calling for 100 shares New York Central Railroad stock at 91 per cent. in ten or fifteen days. The price fixed on the part of the buyer is always a fraction above the cash price. If the stock goes down ten, twenty, or thirty per cent., the party buying the *call* can only lose \$50. If it goes up to 91½, he gets his money back, and all above that is so much profit. This business is confined almost entirely to the curb-stone brokers — it is a species of betting about on a par with "roulette." — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, 1857.

**CALUMET.** (Old Fr.) Among the aboriginals of America, a pipe, used for smoking tobacco, whose bowl is usually of soft red marble, and the tube a long reed, ornamented with feathers. The *calumet* is used as a symbol or instrument of peace and war. To accept the calumet is to agree to the terms of peace; and to refuse it is to reject them. The *calumet of peace* is used to seal or ratify contracts and alliances, to receive strangers kindly, and to travel with safety. The *calumet of war*, differently made, is used to proclaim war. — *Webster, Dic.*

As soon as we sat down, the Illinois [Indians] presented us, according to custom, their *calumet*, which one must needs accept, or else he would be looked upon as an open enemy or a mere brute. — *Marquette*, 1673.

The savages make use of the *calumet* in all their negotiations and state affairs; for when they have a calumet in their hand, they go where they will in safety. — *La Hontan*.

**CAMP-MEETING.** A meeting held in the wood or field for religious purposes, where the assemblage encamp and remain several days. These meetings are generally held by the Methodists. The Mormons call it a *Wood-meeting*.

**CAMP OUT.** To encamp out of doors for the night.

The surveying party did not always return to the hut at night, but it *camped out*, as they called it, whenever the work led them to a distance. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol II. p. 88.

**CAMPBELLITE.** A follower of the doctrines of Alexander Campbell. See *Christian*.

**CANADA BALSAM.** See *Balsam Fir*.

**CANADA NETTLE.** See *Albany Hemp*.

**CANADA RICE.** (*Zizania aquatica*.) A plant which grows in deep water along the edges of ponds and sluggish streams, in the Northern States and Canada. It is called, in some places, Wild Rice and Water Oats.

**CANCER ROOT.** A species of *orobanche* of Linnæus. Yellowish plants, famous as ingredients in "cancer powders."

**CANE-BRAKE.** A thicket of canes. They abound in the low lands from South Carolina to Louisiana.

Did you ever hear of a bar bustin' in through a *cane-brake*, and know how near a hurricane it is? — *Story of the Bear Hunter*.

**CANE-MEADOW.** The Carolinian name for a cane-brake. — *Bartram*.

**CANE-TRASH.** See *Bagasse*.

**CANEY.** *Caney Fork* or *Branch* is a frequent name for streams in Kentucky and Tennessee, undoubtedly from canes having grown there formerly, although now extirpated.

**CANKER-RASH.** The disease called Scarlatina.

**CANOE.** (West Indian, *canahua*, *canóa*.) An Indian boat made of bark or skins.

**CANT-HOOK.** A wooden lever with an iron hook at one end, with which heavy articles of merchandise or timber are canted over. Sometimes called Can-hook.

**CAN'T COME IT,** is a vulgar expression for cannot do it. "You *can't come it* over me so," i. e. you cannot take such an advantage of me. Mr. Hamilton notices this expression among the provincialisms of Yorkshire. — *Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 353.



The following dialogue is reported to have occurred in a crowded New York omnibus:

*Old Gent.* Let me take you on my lap.

*Woman.* No, you *can't come that*, old chap;

He that takes that task to do

Must be some likelier one than you.

CANTELOPE, CANTELUPE, or CANTELEUPE. (*Cucumis melo*.) A species of muskmelon.

CANTICOY, or CANTICA. An Iroquois Indian word, denoting a social gathering or dancing assembly. It is still used by aged people in New York and on Long Island.

At their *canticas*, or dancing matches, where all persons that come are freely entertained, it being a festival time. — *Denton's Description of New York*, 1670.

CANVAS-BACK. (*Anas valisneriana*.) A wild duck, found chiefly in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and highly esteemed for the delicacy of its flesh. It derives its name from the color of its back.

CANYON. (Span. *cañon*.) A narrow, tunnel-like passage between high and precipitous banks, formed by mountains or table-lands, often with a river running beneath. These occur in the great Western prairies. In New Mexico and California they are very common.

The Platte forces its way through a barrier of table-lands, forming one of those striking peculiarities incident to mountain streams, called a *cañon*. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 111.

The river Gila comes in [to the Colorado] nearly at right angles, and the point of junction, strangely chosen, is the hard butte through which, with their united forces, they cut a *cañon*, and then flow off due west, etc. . . . The walls of the *cañon* are vertical, and about fifty feet high, and 1,000 feet long. — *Emory's New Mexico and California*, p. 95.

TO CAP ALL. To surpass all; to cap the climax.

Well, the horse got stuck in one of them snowbanks, and there we sot unable to stir; and to *cap all*, Deacon Bedott was took with a dreadful crick in his back. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

TO CAP THE CLIMAX is to surpass every thing. Old English. A letter from Mexico, in speaking of the excesses of the American soldiers, says:

Several robberies were committed by them at Jalapa, but at Cantepec they robbed almost every house, and, to *cap the climax*, robbed the church. — *Alexandria Gazette*.

The western hunter, when he wishes to *cap the climax* of braggadocio with respect to his own prowess, says, "he can whip his weight in wild-cats." — *Thorpe's Backwoods*.

CAP-SHEAF. A small sheaf of straw forming the top of a stack. — *Dorset Glossary*. Figuratively used, in the United States, to denote the highest degree, the summit.

Of all the days that I ever did see in this 'ere world, moving-day in New York is the *capsheaf*. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 43.

There's one manufacture in New England that might stump all Europe to produce the like — the manufacture of wooden nutmegs. That's a *capsheaf* that bangs the bush. — *Sam Slick*.

Sam Pendergrass's wife has been tellin' me about the party; and of all the strains ever I heard on, I should think that the *capsheaf*. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 88.

**CAPE MAY GOODY.** The name given, on the Jersey coast, to the Lafayette fish.

**CAPTAIN'S BEAT.** The limits within which the members of a military company reside. Within the same limits the votes are received on election days. Southern.

**CAPTION.** This legal term is used in the newspapers in cases where an Englishman would say *title*, *head*, or *heading*.

**TO CAPTIVATE, v. a.** (Lat. *captivo*; Fr. *captiver*.) To take prisoner; to bring into bondage. — *Johnson*. To seize by force; as an enemy in war. — *Webster*.

How ill-becoming is it in thy sex,  
To triumph like an Amazonian trull  
Upon their woes, whom fortune *captivates*. — *Shakespeare*.

They stand firm, keep out the enemy, truth, that would *captivate* or disturb them. — *Locke*.

The unnatural brethren who sold their brother into captivity are now about to be *captivated* themselves, and the *binder* himself to be bound in his turn — *Dr. Adam Clarke, Reflec.*, 4th Genesis.

I have an English engraving published in 1756, entitled "A Prospective View of the Battle fought near Lake George, 8th September, 1755," . . . in which the English were victorious, *captivating* the French general with a number of his men, and putting the rest to flight.

In his remarks on this word, Mr. Pickering says it was new to him, and that he had never seen it in the newspapers. Subsequently, however, he discovered it in two or three of our authors. It cannot be said to be in use among writers at the present day. It is well known, that Congress, in adopting the Declaration of Independence, prepared by Mr. Jefferson, omitted certain passages contained in the original draft. Among these was the following paragraph relating to the slave-trade:

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, *captivating* and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to more miserable death in transportation thither.

In noticing the above passage, Lord Brougham says: The word *captivating* will be reckoned an Americanism (as the Greeks used to say of their colonists, a Solæcism). But it has undoubted English authority — Locke, among others. — *Statesmen of George III.*

Twenty-three people were killed in this surprisal, and twenty-nine were *captivated*. — *Belknap, Hist. New Hampshire*, Vol. I. ch. 10.

The singularly interesting event of *captivating* a second Royal army [Lord Cornwallis's] produced strong emotions. — *Ramsay, History American Revolution*, Vol. II. p. 274.

**CAR.** The carriages that compose a railway train are, with us, called "rail-road cars." These are of various kinds: such as the *passenger-cars*, one of which is the *smoking-car*, for those who must needs indulge in that luxury; the *baggage-car*; and the *mail-car*. Sometimes a whole train is composed of *freight-cars*. The English travel by "rail," or take the "train" from one place to another. We go by the *cars*, or take the *cars*.

**CAR-BRAKE.** A lever which, acting by friction on the wheels, helps to stop the train.

**CAR-HOUSE.** A building in which railroad cars are kept.

**CARIBOU.** The American reindeer, of which there are two species, the Barren Ground, and the Woodland, Caribou.

Harts and *caribous* are killed, both in summer and winter, after the same manner with the elks; excepting that the *caribous*, which are a kind of wild asses, make an easy escape when snow is at hand, by virtue of their broad feet. — *La Hontan, North America*.

**CARLIQUES, or CURLYQUES.** Boyish tricks, capers. *To cut* or *cut up carliques* is to cut capers.

"Sally," says I, "will you take me for better or worse?"

This put her to considering, and I gave a flourishing about the room, and *cut a curlyque* with my right foot, as much as to say, "Take your own time." — *McClintock's Tales*.

It is generally supposed that nature is perfect in all her works, — except when she gets odd freaks in her head, and *cuts up carliques* by way of experiment. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 48.

**CAROLINA ALLSPICE.** See *Allspice*.

**CAROLINA POTATO.** The sweet potato (*Convolvulus batata*), so called in the Eastern States.

**CARPET WEED.** A small spreading plant, common in cultivated ground (*Mollugo*). — *Bigelow's Plants of Boston*.

**TO CARRY AWAY.** To move to ecstasy, to transport. A puritanical deacon,

shocked at the idea of introducing an organ into a church, getting much excited, exclaimed:

Organs of wood and brass seem like idolatry, as if we could n't praise the Lord with our natural voices! — I got *carried away*, and am certainly afraid all this care for the outer portion will only make it worse for the better part of us. — *Eastford, or Household Sketches*.

"Do you remember old Jabe Green's wife up to Wiggletown?" said the Widow Bedott "She was always *carried away* with every new thing. Two or three years ago, when Millerism was makin' such a noise, she was clear killed up with it. Again she was wide awake against Sabbath-breakin' — then 't was moral reform." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 123.

**CARRY-ALL.** A four-wheeled pleasure carriage, capable of holding several persons or a family; hence its name. Some, however, consider it a corruption of the French *carriole*. The name is common in the Northern States. In Canada it is applied to a sleigh.

**CARRY-LOG.** A set of wheels used for transporting timber.

One day, 'bout two weeks after I commenced workin' for the Squire, I was drivin' 'long, settin' straddle of a stock on my *carry-log*, when I sorter druv over a little stump, and the durned log come unfastened. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**TO CARRY ON.** To riot; to frolic.

We notice some young scapegraces, who get up their wild freaks at night and continue them till morning. Sometimes they *carry on* even longer than this. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**CARRYINGS-ON.** Riotings, frolickings.

There is good authority for the use of this term by English writers of the seventeenth century.

Is this the end

To which these *carryings-on* did tend?

*Bulter's Hudibras*, Pt. 1, Cant. 2.

Everybody tuck Christmas, especially the niggers, and sich *carryins-on* — sich dancin' and singin' — and shootin' poppers and sky-rackets — you never did see. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

When he reflected that wherever there were singin' schools, there would be *carryings-on*, he thought the cheapest plan would be to let them have their fun out. — *Peter Cram, in Knickerbocker Mag.*

"Jeff, let them seminary galls alone," said his aunt; "they are a wild set; and do n't have such *carryins-on* with them." — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**CARTMAN.** (Pron. *carman*.) One who drives a cart.

**CASE.** A character, a queer one; as, "That Sol Haddock is a *case*."

"What a hard *case* he is," meaning a reckless scapegrace, *mauvais sujet*.

"I say, Jekyl," said Tom Gordon, "this sister of mine is a pretty rapid little *case*, as you saw by the way she circumvented us this morning." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 203.

CASHAW, sometimes spelt *kershaw*. A pumpkin. Western.

CASSAREAP. The juice of the bitter yuca-root boiled down to a sauce. Heat dissipates the poisonous property of the fresh juice. West Indies.

CASSAVA, or CASSADA. (W. Ind. *casavi*.) The native name of a shrub of Central and South America, from the root of which Tapioca and Mandioca are extracted. See *Tapioca*.

CASTAÑAS, or CHESTNUTS, in tropical America, is the name given sometimes to the Jack Fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), and sometimes to the edible fruit of the Screw Pine (*Pandanus*).

CASWASH! Dash! splash! The noise made by a body falling into the water. See *Cachunk*.

CATALPA. (*Catalpa cordifolia*.) An ornamental tree; a shade-tree with large flowers, common in the Middle States. The aboriginal name.

CATAMOUNT. A name applied synonymously with Panther and Painter to several wild, fierce animals analogous to *Felis concolor*, but not specially employed to designate that species.

CATAWAMPOUSLY, or CATAWAMPTIOUSLY. Fiercely, eagerly. To be *catawampiously* *chawed up* is to be completely demolished, utterly defeated. One of the ludicrous monstrosities in which the vulgar language of the South-western States abounds.

In this debate Mr. B. was *catawampiously* *chawed up*; his arguments were not only met, but his sarcasm returned upon himself with great effect. — *Charleston Mercury*.

There's something cowardly in the idea of disunion. Where is the wealth and power that should make us fourteen millions take to our heels before three hundred thousand slaveholders, for fear of being *catawampiously* *chawed up*? — *Speech of Fred. Douglass*, 1857.

Citizens and fellers; on the bloody ground on which our fathers *catawampiously* poured out their claret free as oil, let the catamount loose, and prepare the engines of vengeance. — *S. H. Hill, Speech on the Oregon Question*.

CATAWBA GRAPE. A cultivated variety of *Vitis labrusca*. It is the great wine-grape of the United States.

CATCH. A term used among fishermen to denote a quantity of fish taken at one time.

It is said that the *catch* of blue fish in the inlet and river is greater than ever known so early in the season, and that they are served up *secundem artem* at Mr. Williston's. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*, June 24.

TO CATCH A WEASEL ASLEEP. It is supposed that this little animal is never caught napping, for the obvious reason that he sleeps in his hole beyond the reach of man. The expression is applied to persons who are

watchful and always on the alert, or who cannot be surprised; as, "You cannot deceive me, any sooner than you can *catch a weasel asleep*," or, "You can't *catch a weasel asleep*." The expressions are common.

**TO CATCH UP.** Among travellers across the great prairies, the phrase means, to prepare the horses and mules for the march.

The mule must have been there seven or eight hours, by the grass she had eat; a pony had been latched there too, and after the mule had been *caught up*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Tale*.

They travelled all night, and when day broke took to the bush, camped down a smart piece off the trail, stayed till about noon, *caught up* their fresh horses, took a bee line through the timber, and, when night came, pushed for the trail agin. — *Ibid.*

Come, boys, it's daylight, we've a long march before us; so *catch up*, and we'll be off. — *Prairie Scenes*.

**CATFISH.** (Genus *Prinelodus*. Cuvier.) This fish, in several varieties, is common throughout the United States under different popular names. It is also called by the name of Horned-pout, Bull-head, Mud-pout, Minister, or simply Cat. There is a very large species called the Channel Catfish, which is noticed by Dr. Kirtland in his Report on the Geology of Ohio.

**CATSTICK.** A bat, or cudgel, used by New England boys in a game at ball. It is known by the same name in England, though used for a different play. In Pennsylvania, Maryland, and further south, the term is applied to small wood for burning.

When the cat is laid upon the ground, the player with his cudgel or *catstick* strikes it smartly, it matters not at which end, and it will rise high enough for him to beat it away as it falls, in the same manner as he would a ball. — *Strutt, Sports and Pastimes*.

**CAT-TAIL GRASS.** Herds-grass, or timothy.

**CATTING.** Fishing for "cat." Thus, a story is told of an old negro, who while fishing was seen to keep only the catfish and throw all others, even of the better kinds, back into the water. On being asked the reason, he replied, "Lilly massa, when I goes a *cattin*, I goes a *cattin*."

**CATTLE-RANGE.** In Kentucky, a park.

**CAUCUS.** A private meeting of the leading politicians of a party, to agree upon the plans to be pursued in an approaching election.

Gordon, in his History of the American Revolution, 1788, says: "The word is not of novel invention. More than fifty years ago, Mr. Samuel Adams's father, and twenty others, one or two from the north end of the town, where all ship business is carried on, used to meet, make a *caucus*, and lay their plan for introducing certain persons into places of trust

and power. When they had settled it, they separated, and used each his particular influence within his own circle," etc. — Vol. I. p. 240.

"From the above remarks of Dr. Gordon on this word," says Mr. Pickering, "it would seem that these meetings were in some measure under the direction of men concerned in the '*ship business*;' and I had therefore thought it not improbable that *caucus* might be a corruption of *caulkers*', the word 'meetings' being understood. I was afterwards informed that several gentlemen in Salem and Boston believed this to be the origin of the word."

The earliest mention of this word, that has come under my notice, is in John Adams's Diary, under date of February, 1763, where he says :

This day learned that the *caucus club* meets, at certain times, in the garret of Tom Dawes, the adjutant of the Boston regiment. — *Works*, Vol. II. p. 144.

I'll be a voter, and this is a big character, able to shoulder a steamboat, and carry any candidate that the *caucus* at Baltimore may set up against the people. What's the people to a *caucus*? Nothing but a dead ague to an earthquake. — *Crocket's Tour*, p. 206.

**TO BE A CAUTION.** To be a warning. A common slang expression.

The way the Repealers were used up *was a caution* to the trinity of O'Connell, Repeal, and Anti-Slavery, when they attempt to interfere with true American citizens. — *New York Herald*.

There's a plaguy sight of folks in America, Major, and the way they swallow down the cheap books *is a caution* to old iags and paper-makers. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 3.

Moses wound up his description of the piano, by saying that the way the dear creeturs could pull music out of it *was a caution* to hoarse owls. — *Thorpe's Mysteries of the Backwoods*, p. 24.

A large portion of Capt Marryatt's "*Travels of Mons. Violet*," is stolen from the New Orleans Picayune; and it will not be surprising if Kendall [the author] lets his sting into this trans-Atlantic robber. He can do it in a way that will *be a caution*. — *Providence Journal*.

Our route was along the shore of the lake in a northerly direction, and the way the icy blast would come down the bleak shore *was a caution*. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 234.

**CAVERN LIMESTONE.** The carboniferous limestone of Kentucky, so called from the innumerable caves which its hard strata contain. In the softer limestone of the West, the roof of the cavern falls in and forms on the surface a "sink" or "sinkhole," a funnel-shaped depression, which, if the opening is not closed, sometimes proves fatal to animals, and even to man.

**CAWHALUX!** Whop! The noise made by a box on the ear.

I hadn't sot no time before, *cawhalux!* some one took me the right side o' the head

with a dratted big book. The fire flew out of my eyes like red coals. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**CAVORTIN.** A corruption of the word "curvetting," applied to horses and their riders when prancing about in order to show off; and then figuratively to any person capering about. A word chiefly used in the Southern States.

A whole gang of fellers, and a heap more of young ladies, came ridin' up and reinin' in, and prancin' and *cavortin'*. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 41.

He tossed himself into every attitude which man could assume on horseback. In short, he *cavorted* most magnanimously. — *Georgia Scenes*.

Old Alic had a daughter, that war a most enticin' creatur; and I seed Tom Settlers *cavortin'* round her like a young buffalo. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

There's some monstrous fractious characters down in our beat, and they mus n't come a *cavortin'* about me when I give orders — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 20

**CAVALLARD.** (Span. *caballada*.) A term used, in Louisiana and Texas, by the caravans which cross the prairies, to denote a band of horses or mules.

The chef d'œuvre of this Indian's rascality was exhibited in his stealing our whole *cavallard*, consisting of ten head of horses and mules, which he drove to the mountains. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 80.

Two or three were mounted, and sent into the prairie in search of the *caviarde* of horses. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 97.

**TO CAVE IN.** Said of the earth which falls down when digging into a bank. Figuratively, to break down; to give up.

He was a plucky fellow, and warn't a goin' to *cave in* that way. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 55.

At the late dinner, Mr. W—— arose to make a speech, but soon *caved in*. — *Washington Paper*.

The South-western and Western Locos, it is thought, will *cave in*, and finally go for the Treaty [of peace with Mexico], though they talk loud against it now. — *New York Tribune*, March 4, 1848.

Dr. Kane, in alluding to the weak state of his companions, says, Morton felt so much better that he got up at six; but he *caved in* soon after. — *Arctic Explorations*, Vol. II. p. 94.

**CAVESON.** (Fr. *caveçon*.) A muzzle for a horse. New England.

There, Chilion, it is just as I told you. The rake-shame put a *caveson* on him. — *Margaret*, p. 304.

**CAYMAN.** (West Indian.) This native name for the alligator is still retained in the West Indies.

**CAZIQUE.** See *Cacique*.

**CEDAR.** A name applied, in the United States, to different genera of the Pine family. The Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is a juniper.



The White Cedar (*Cypressus thyoides*) is a cypress, which is found in the "Cedar Swamps."

**CENSUS.** In the United States, an enumeration of the inhabitants of all the States, taken by order of Congress, to furnish the rule of apportioning the representation among the States, and the number of representatives to which each State is entitled in the Congress; also the enumeration of the inhabitants of a State, taken by order of the Legislature. — *Webster*.

**CENT.** A copper coin of the United States, whose value is the hundredth part of a dollar. — *Webster*.

**CERTAIN,** for certainly. "He's dead *certain*." "I'll go to-morrow sure and *certain*." Very common.

**CHAINED LIGHTNING.** Western, for forked lightning.

**CHALK.** A *long chalk* vulgarly means a great distance, a good deal. When a person attempts to effect a particular object, in which he fails, we say, "He can't do it *by a long chalk*."

'Twas about calf-time, and not a hundred year ago, *by a long chalk*, that the biggest kind of rendezvous was held to Independence, a mighty handsome little location away up on old Missouri. — *Ruxton, Far West*, p. 14.

Put on your hat, or you may get a sun-stroke, which will cause you more pain than the helmet did *by a long chalk*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

If Nova Scotia is behind in intelligence, it is a *long chalk* ahead on us in other respects. — *Sam Slick*.

**CHANGE.** To *meet with a change* is to have change of heart, to experience religion.

"Do you mean to insinuate that ye've *met with a change*?" said the Widow Bedott to Jim Clarke, the peddler.

"I think I may confidently say I hev," said Jim.

"How long since?"

"Wall, about a year and a half. I experienced religion over in Varmount, at a protracted meetin'. I tell ye, Widow, them special efforts is great things; ever sence I've come out, I've felt like another critter." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 108.

**CHAPARRAL.** In Spain, a *chaparral* is a bush of a species of oak. The termination *al* signifies a *place abounding in*; as, *chaparral*, a place of oak-bushes; *almendral*, an almond orchard; *parral*, a vineyard; *cafetal*, a coffee plantation, etc., etc.

This word, *chapparal*, has been introduced into the language since our acquisition of Texas and New Mexico, where these bushes abound. It is a series of thickets, of various sizes, from one hundred yards to a mile through, with bushes and briars, all covered with thorns, and so closely entwined together as almost to prevent the passage of any thing larger than a wolf or hare.

We had, too, a lieutenant of His Majesty's Royal Marines, another of Nature's noblemen, who preferred a camp to the toils of field sports, when a scub was to be crawled under or forced through at the risk of tattered garments, scratched hands, and bleeding noses, to say nothing about a basking rattlesnake or so, as formidable as the *chapparal* of Palo Alto, defended by gigantic cactus here, sharp-pointed yuccas there, and cat-claw briars everywhere. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**TO CHAW.** To champ between the teeth; to masticate; to chew. — *Johnson. Webster*. This, according to all lexicographers, is the legitimate word. Although found in good authors, it is retained, in this country as in England, only by the illiterate.

I home returning, flaught with foul despoite,  
And *chawing* vengeance all the way I went. — *Spenser, F. Queen*.

The man who laught but once, to see an ass  
Mumbling to make the cross-grained thistles pass  
Might laugh again, to see a jury *chaw*  
The prickles of unpalatable law. — *Dryden*.

**TO CHAW UP.** To demolish, discomfit.

I heerd Tom Jones swar he'd *chaw* me up, if an inch big of me was found in them diggins in the mornin'. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 63.

Miss Patience smiled, and looked at Joe Cash. Cash's knees trembled. All eyes were upon him. He swat all over. Miss Patience said she was gratified to hear Mr. Cash was a musician; she admired people who had a musical taste. Whereupon Cash fell into a chair, as he afterwards observed, *chawed up*. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 28.

**TO CHAW UP ONE'S WORDS.** To eat one's words, to retract.

Do you want me to tell a lie by *chawing up my own words*? — *Southern Sketches*, p. 34.

**CHEBACCO BOAT.** A description of fishing vessel employed in the Newfoundland fisheries. They are also called Pinksterns, and sometimes Tobacco Boats. The word is doubtless a corruption of *Chedabucto*, the name of a bay in Nova Scotia, from which vessels are fitted out for fishing.

**CHECKERS, i. e. Chequers.** The common name for the game which is called *draughts* in England. Mr. Todd, in his edition of Johnson's Dictionary, has the word, "*Checker*, a chess-board, or draught-board."

The *checkers*, at this time a common sign of a public-house, was originally intended, I should suppose, for a kind of draught-board, called tables, and showed that there the game might be played. — *Brand, Popular Antiquities*.

**CHEQUER BERRY.** (*Mitchella*.) A handsome little creeping plant, the only species of its genus, more commonly known as the Partridge Berry. Also called Chickberry.

**CHESS.** (*Bromus secalinus*.) A troublesome weed, often found in wheat fields, which gave rise to the erroneous opinion that it was degenerated wheat. It is also called Cheat.

**CHESSYCAT.** (Cheshire Cat.) Although Charles Lamb's query as to the reason why cats grin in Cheshire has not yet met with a satisfactory solution, still the fact itself seems to remain undisputed. A correspondent of the New York Tribune, discussing the distinctive quality that separates man from the brute creation, observes, "Rabelais, forgetting the hyena and the *Chessycat*, says it is laughter."

**CHEWINK.** The ground robin; so called from its peculiar note. On Long Island it is called the Towhee Goldfinch; and in Louisiana, from its plumpness, Grasset. — *Natural History of New York*.

**CHICHA.** (West Ind.) A fermented liquor made of Indian corn.

**CHICKADEE.** The black-cap titmouse, a very common little bird, so called from its peculiar note. — *Audubon, Ornith.*

**CHICKAREE.** (*Sciurus hudsonii*.) The popular name of the Red Squirrel.

**CHICKASAW PLUM.** (*Prunus chicensis*.) A plum growing on the bank\* of the Red River, Arkansas, upon small bushes from two to six feet high. They are very large and sweet, and vary in color from a light pink to a deep crimson. — *Capt. Marcy's Report*, p. 19.

**CHICKEN SNAKE.** A name popularly applied\* to various species of snakes which are considered as particularly destructive to chickens and eggs.

**CHICKEN FIXINGS.** In the Western States, a chicken fricassee.

The remainder of the breakfast table [in New York] was filled up with some warmed-up old hen, called *chicken fixings*. — *Rubio, Travels in the U. S.*

We trotted on very fast, in the assurance of rapidly approaching a snug breakfast of *chicken fixings*, eggs, ham doins, and corn slap-jacks — *Carlton, New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 69.

I guess I'll order supper. What shall it be? corn-bread and common doins, or wheat-bread and *chicken fixings*? — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., p. 118.

**CHICKEN GRAPE.** The River Grape, or *Vitis riparia*; also called Frost Grape. The sterile vine is cultivated for its sweet-scented blossoms, and is then called Bermudian Vine.

**CHIGOE**, spelt also *chigre*, *chigger*, *jigger*, etc. (*Pulex penetrans*.) Sand-fleas, which penetrate under the skin of the feet, particularly the toes. As soon as they accomplish this, an itching sensation is felt; when the *chigre* ought to be removed by means of a needle breaking the skin. No uneasiness follows; but should this precaution be neglected, the insect breeds in the toe, and sometimes produces dreadful sores. These insects

are found in the West Indies, and the adjacent shores of the Gulf of Mexico. — *Carmichael's West Indies*, Vol. I. p. 189.

In Kentucky the term is applied to a minute red *acarus*, or tick, which buries itself in the skin, while the true chico of the South (a *pulex*) causes torment by the growth of the eggs which it deposits under the skin.

CHILD. *This child* is a common expression in the West for "this person," i. e. myself.

Human nature can't go on feeding on civilized fixings in this big village; and *this child* has felt like going West for many a month, being half froze for bufler meat and mountain doins. — *Ruxton, Far West*.

CHILLS AND FEVER. A name for fever and ague.

CHINCAPIN. (Powhatan Ind.) (*Castanea pumila*.) A diminutive species of chestnut, shaped like a boy's top, common south of Pennsylvania.

They have a small fruit growing on little trees, husked like a chestnut, but the fruit most like a very small Acone. This they call *Chechinquamins*, which they esteeme a great dantie. — *Smith's Virginia*.

CHINCH, or CHINTS. (Span. *chinche*.) The name given in the Southern and Middle States to the Bed-bug (*cimex*).

*Chinches* are a sort of flat bug, which lurks in the bedsteads and bedding, and disturbs people's rest a-nights. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705.

CHINCH-BUG. A fetid insect, destructive to wheat, maize, etc., in the Southern and Western States. — *Farm. Encyclop.*

CHINESE SUGAR-CANE. A name given to the *Sorghum Saccharatum*.

TO CHINK. To fill up chinks, or interstices. The process of filling with clay the interstices between the logs of houses in the new countries, and then plastering them over with the same material, is called *chinking and daubing*. In the north of England it is called *daubing and filling*. — *Moor*.

Our log-house quarters, however, were closely *chinked and daubed*, and we passed a comfortable night. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Exp.*, Vol. I. p. 28.

The interstices of the log wall were "*chinked*" — the *chinking* being large chips and small slabs, dipping like strata of rocks in geology; and the *daubing*, yellow clay ferociously splashed in soft by the hand of the architect. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 61.

A huge pair of antlers occupied a conspicuous place in the little cabin, and upon its *unchinked* walls many a coon and deer skin were drying. — *The Fire Hunt*.

I met with a lot of these the other day in Southern Illinois; and as it can have no bearing upon the election now, perhaps you would like to have it to use for *chinking* in among your election returns. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**CHIPMUK, or CHIPMONK.** The popular name for the Striped Squirrel (*Sciurus striatus*). Probably an Indian word.

The children were never tired of watching the vagaries of the little *chipmonk*, as he glanced from branch to branch — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

**CHIRAMOYA.** (*Annona chirimoya*.) The Custard Apple of the more temperate part of the tropics.

**CHIRK.** Lively, cheerful, in good spirits, in a comfortable state; as when one inquires about a sick person, it is said, he is *chirk*. The word is wholly lost, except in New England. — *Webster*. It is doubtless derived from the old verb *to chirk* (Ang. Sax. *cercian*), i. e. to chirp, which is found in old English writers.

Afore I had mixed a second glass of switchel, up they came, and the General looked as *chirk* and lively as a skipper. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*.

**TO CHIRRUPE.** To cheer up; to quicken or animate a horse by a peculiar sound or chirping. It is not noticed by Johnson, though it is common in England.

The mustang needs but a *chirrup* to arouse him, and set him off at a gait which an Eastern horse can hardly attain. — *Prairie Scenes*.

**TO CHISEL.** To cheat, to swindle. Comp. *To gouge*. A Western word.

The banking-house of — have, by their recent failure, *chiselled* the people of California out of a million of dollars. — *Alta Californian*.

To those who are in the habit of being *chiselled* by their butchers and grocers, we would advise a visit to the governor's room and examine the standard of weights and measures. — *New York Herald*.

"State your case," said a Western lawyer to a "sucker," who had applied for advice.

"It's an infarnal mean case of woman-swindling; it sets my teeth a gritten to think on it, I've been owdaciously *chiselled*, dan darn my foolish pictur! I might have known that puke war n't to be trusted. — *St. Louis Reveille*.

**CHITLINS.** (A contraction of *chitterlings*.) Rags, tatters.

While I was in this way rolling in clover, they were tearing my character all to *chitlins* up at home. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

They did all they could to tear my reputation to *chitlins*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 188.

I told you it wur a sorrowful story, but you would hev it out, and jest see how it makes perfect *chitlins* of your feelins. — *Western Tales*.

**CHIVALRY.** A cant term for the people of the South.

Had the Free States been manly enough, true enough, to enact the Wilmot Proviso as to all present or future territories of the Union, we should have had just about the same didoes cut up by the *chivalry* that we have witnessed, and with no more damage to the Union. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 10, 1851.

**TO CHOCK.** (A corruption of *check*.) To put a wedge under a thing to prevent its moving; thus to "*chock*" a barrel or cart-wheel, is to put a piece of wood or a stone under it to keep it steady.

**CHOCOLATE.** (Mexican, *chocolatl*.) The paste, or cake, made of the roasted kernel of the cacao. When prepared in foreign countries, it is mixed with sugar, cinnamon, or vanilla.

**CHOCK UP.** Close, tight; said of a thing which fits closely to another.

**CHOCK-FULL.** Entirely full; see also *Chuck-full*.

I'm *chock-full* of genius and running over, said Pigwiggin. — *Neal*.

By this time we got into a shabby-looking street, *chock-full* of hogs and boys. — *May. Downing, May-day in New York.*

**CHOGSET.** See *Burgall*.

**CHOK BERRY.** (*Pyrus arbutifolia*.) A plant having astringent properties.

**CHOK CHERRY.** The popular name of the *Prunus virginiana*, so called from its astringent properties.

**TO CHOK OFF.** To stop (a person) in the execution of a purpose. A figurative expression, borrowed from the act of choking a dog to make him loose his hold. To arrest a public speaker when growing tedious, is called *choking him off*. This is done by shuffling the feet, applauding where applause is uncalled for, by putting questions of order, etc.

I spent a couple of hours in the House, amused by watching the dignified proceedings of our Representatives. The operation of "*choking off*" a speaker was very funny, and reminded me of the lawless conduct of fighting school-boys. — *New York Express*, Feb. 21, 1848.

**TO CHOMP.** To chew loudly, to champ. This pronunciation is common to the North of England and to New England. (Also used in the West and South.)

**CHOP.** A Chinese word signifying quality; first introduced by mariners in the China trade, but which has now become common in all our sea-ports. Originally the word was applied only to silks, teas, or other goods from China; now the phrase *first chop* is an equivalent to "first-rate," and applied to every thing.

A smart little boss, says I, you are a cleaning of; he looks like a *first chop* article. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

I went to board at a famous establishment in Broadway, where sundry young merchants of the *first chop* were wont to board. — *Perils of Pearl Street*.

**CHORE.** A small piece of domestic work, a little job, a char.

In England, the word *char* is used both as a noun and as a verb. The pronunciation also varies; in some of the southern counties it is pronounced *cheure*, or *choor*.

In America, the noun only is employed, and generally in the plural. The pronunciation is uniformly *chore*. It is mostly confined to New England.

Hunting cattle is a dreadful *chore*, remarked one of our neighbors, after threading the country for three weeks in search of his best ox. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*

Radney comes down and milks the cow, and does some of my other little *chores*. — *Margaret*, p. 388.

Girl hunting is certainly among our most formidable *chores*. — *Mrs. Kirkland, Western Clearings*.

The editor of the Boston Daily Star, in recently relinquishing his charge, gives the following notice :

Any one wishing corn hoed, gardens weeded, wood sawed, coal pitched in, paragraphs written, or small *chores* done with despatch and on reasonable terms, will please make immediate application to the retiring editor.

**CHOWDER.** A favorite dish in New England, made of fish, pork, onions, and biscuit stewed together. Cider and champagne are sometimes added. Pic-nic parties to the sea-shore generally have a dish of *chowder*, prepared by themselves in some grove near the beach, from fish caught at the same time. Grose describes the same as a sea-dish.

**CHRISTIAN** (pron. with the first *i* long). A name assumed by a sect which arose from the great revival in 1801.

**CHRISTIANIZATION.** This substantive is to be found occasionally in our religious publications. The verb *to christianize*, which is in the dictionaries, is in use among the English writers; but the substantive is never employed by them. — *Pickering, Vocabulary*.

**CHUB.** A name sometimes given to the Blackfish.

**CHUB SUCKER.** A sea-fish, otherwise called the Horned Sucker.

**CHUCK-FULL.** Entirely full. Common in familiar language, as well as *chock-full*, which see for other examples.

[At dinner] the sole labor of the attendants was to keep the plates *chuck-full* of something. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 181.

I'll throw that in, to make *chuck-full* the "measure of the country's glory." — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 86.

**CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW.** The common name of a bird of the whippoorwill family. (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*.) Mr. Audubon says: "About the middle of March, the forests of Louisiana are heard to echo with the well-known notes of this interesting bird. No sooner has the sun disappeared, and the nocturnal insects emerge from their burrows, than the sound '*Chuck-will's-widow*,' repeated with great clearness and power six or seven times in as many seconds, strike the ear." — *Ornithology*, Vol. I. p. 273.

**CHUFA.** (See *Earth Almond*.)

**CHUCK-A-LUCK.** A Western game, played with dice.

At Holly Fork, Tennessee, any one can be accommodated. Cards or *chuck-a-luck*, old corn or cider, a fight or a foot-race, mattered not, it was to be had at a moment's notice. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 160.

**CHUK!** A noise made in calling swine. Always repeated at least three times.

**CHUNK.** A short, thick piece of wood, or of any thing else; a chump. The word is provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States.

I rode an all-fired smart *chunk* of a poney — real creole — cane raised — walk six miles an hour, and run like a scared deer in a prairie a-fire. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*, *Frontier Incident*.

It is true that now and then a small *chunk* of sentiment or patriotism or philanthropy is thrown in awkwardly among the crudities and immoralities [of the stage] — but it evidently has no business there. — *New York in Sluces*, *The Theatre*.

**TO CHUNK.** To throw sticks or chips at one. Southern and Western.

**CHUNK-YARD or CHUNKEE-YARD.** A name given by the white traders to the oblong four-square yards adjoining the high mounts and rotundas of the modern Indians of Florida. In the centre of these stands the obelisk, and at each corner of the further end stands a slave post, or strong stake, where the captives that are burnt alive are bound. — *Bartram*.

The pyramidal hills or artificial mounts, and highways or avenues, leading from them to artificial lakes or ponds, vast tetragon terraces, *chunk-yards*, and obelisks or pillars of wood, are the only monuments of labor, ingenuity, and magnificence, that I have seen worthy of notice. — *Bartram*, *Travels in Florida*, (1773,) p. 518.

This is doubtless an Indian term, and the enclosure a place where the natives played a game called *chunkee*, as will appear by the following extract from Du Pratz :

“The warriors practise a diversion which they call the *game of the pole*, at which only two play at a time. Each pole is about eight feet long, resembling a Roman f, and the game consists in rolling a flat, round stone, about three inches in diameter and one inch thick, and throwing the pole in such a manner, that when the stone rests the pole may be at or near it. Both the antagonists throw their poles at the same time, and he whose pole is nearest the stone counts one, and has the right of rolling the stone.” — *History of Louisiana*, 1720.

**CHUNKED.** Any person who is impudent or bold, at the South-west, is said to be *chunked*.

**CHUNKY.** Short and thick. Often applied to the stature of a person, as “he is a *chunky* little fellow.”

**CHURCH.** Mr. Pickering has the following remarks on this word: “A church, as a *body of persons*, is distinguished, in New England, from a



*congregation*, by the privileges which the former in general reserve to themselves of receiving exclusively in that church the sacrament and baptism, in consequence of their having publicly declared their assent to the creed which that church maintains. Marriage, burial, and public worship, are open to the members of the congregation at large, according to the forms and methods employed in each church; as are also catechizing for children and visits to the sick." — *Vocabulary*.

CIDER. *All talk and no cider* is a phrase equivalent to "great cry and little wool."

CIDER BRANDY. See *Apple Brandy*.

CIDER OIL. Cider concentrated by boiling, to which honey is subsequently added.

CIENEGA. (Span.) A marsh. New Mexico and Texas. A small marsh is called a *cienequita*.

CIMLIN. A squash, so called in the Middle and Southern States.

TO CIRCULATE. To travel. Used in this sense many times in a pamphlet on the "Frauds, Extortions, and Oppressions of the Railroad Monopoly in New Jersey." In comparing the rates of travel in various States, by which it is shown that the rates in New Jersey are the highest in the world, the author says of the traveller:

Arriving in Maryland, a slave State, he *circulates* at a cost of from three to five cents per mile.

CIRCUMSTANCE. *Not a circumstance*, in the sense of a thing of no account, nothing in comparison, is a vulgarism which has become popular within the last few years.

I never saw so lean and spare a gall as Miss A—— since I was raised. Pharaoh's lean kine war n't the smallest part of a *circumstance* to her. I had to look twice before I could see her at all. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 184.

CISCO. The popular name of a fish of the herring kind which abounds in Lake Ontario, particularly in Chaumont Bay at the east end, where thousands of barrels are annually caught and salted. I do not find this name mentioned by Dr. DeKay, in his work on the fishes of New York, in the Natural History of the State.

TO CITIZENIZE. To make a citizen, to admit to the rank and privileges of a citizen. — *Webster*. Rarely used.

Talleyrand was *citizenized* in Pennsylvania, when there in the form of an emigrant. — *T. Pickering*.

CITISS. This word, as well as *citizeness*, was used in America during the first years of the French Revolution, as a translation of the revolutionary

title, *citoyenne*; but it has, for several years, been wholly disused. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

It is unnecessary to recite the discussions on this word by the British critics, the *Quarterly Review*, etc., as it was never adopted into our language. Dr. Webster and the English lexicographers have the word *citess* in their dictionaries, but only in the sense of "a city woman."

**CIVISM.** Love of country; patriotism. — *Webster*. This, like the preceding word, is one of the productions of the French Revolution; and, though frequently used several years ago, is now obsolete here as well as in France. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**CIVILIZEE.** A civilized man; one advanced in civilization. The word has never obtained currency.

The barbarian likes his soraglio; the *civilizee* admires the institution of marriage. The barbarian likes a roving, wandering life; the *civilizee* likes his home and fireside. — *New York Observer*.

**CLABBER.** See *Bonny-Clabber*.

**CLAIM.** A piece of public land which a squatter marks out for himself and settles upon, with the intention of purchasing it when the government will offer it for sale.

**CLAIM-JUMPER.** One who violently seizes on another's land claim.

**CLAIM-JUMPING.** Violently seizing on another's claim.

**CLAM.** The popular name of certain shell-fish, highly esteemed for food. They are of two principal kinds:

1. The Hard Clam (*Venus mercenaria*), a very common mollusk, found buried in the sand or shores of marine districts at half-tide.

2. The Soft Clam, or Mananosay (*Mya arenaria*), obtained from the shores of tidal rivers by digging one or two feet in the loose sand. It has a long, extensible, cartilaginous snout, or proboscis, through which it ejects water; whence it is also called Stem-clam and Piss-clam.

**CLAM-BAKE.** Clams, baked in the primitive style of the Indians, furnish one of the most popular dishes on those parts of the coast where they abound, and constitute a main feature in the bill of fare at pic-nics and other festive gatherings. The method of baking is as follows: A cavity is dug in the earth, about eighteen inches deep, which is lined with round stones. On this a fire is made; and, when the stones are sufficiently heated, a bushel or more of hard clams (according to the number of persons who are to partake of the feast) is thrown upon them. On this is put a layer of rock-weed gathered from the beach, and over this a second layer of sea-weed. Sometimes the clams are simply placed close together on the ground, with the hinges uppermost, and over them is

made a fire of brush. This is called an *Indian bed* of clams. Clams baked in this manner are preferred to those cooked in the usual way in the kitchen.

Parties of ten or twenty persons, of both sexes, are the most common. Often they extend to a hundred, when other amusements are added; and on one occasion, that of a grand political mass-meeting in favor of Gen. Harrison on the 4th of July, 1840, nearly 10,000 persons assembled in Rhode Island, for whom a *clambake* and *chowder* were prepared. This was probably the greatest feast of the kind that ever took place in New England.

**CLAM-SHELL.** The lips, or mouth. There is a common though vulgar expression in New England, of "Shut your *clam-shell*," that is, "Shut your mouth, hold your tongue." The padlock now used on the United States mail-bags is called the "Clam-shell padlock."

**CLAPBOARD.** A thin, narrow board, used to cover the sides of houses, and placed so as to overlap the one below it. In England, according to Bailey's Dictionary, a *clapboard* is a thin board formed ready for the cooper's use, in order to make casks or vessels.

**TO CLAPBOARD.** To cover with clapboarding.

The house was neat and comfortable. It was a small frame building, *clapboarded* on the sides and roof. — *Margaret*, p. 18.

**CLAPE.** The common name of the Golden-winged Woodpecker, in the State of New York. Dr. DeKay thinks it "a provincial word, introduced by the early English colonists." It is elsewhere called High-hole, Yucker, Flicker, Wake-up, and Pigeon Woodpecker; in Louisiana, *Pique-bois jaune*. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**CLATTERWHACKING.** A clatter, racket.

When we went a bar hunting, I heard the darndest *clatterwhacking* and noise in the road behind us. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 32.

**CLAY-EATERS.** A miserable set of people inhabiting some of the Southern States, who subsist chiefly on turpentine whiskey, and appease their craving for more substantial food by filling their stomachs with a kind of aluminous earth which abounds everywhere. This gives them a yellowish, drab-colored complexion, with dull eyes, and faces whose idiotic expression is only varied by a dull despair or a devilish malignity. They are looked down upon by the negroes with a contempt which they return by a hearty hatred. — *Ida May*.

**THE CLEAN THING.** A low expression, denoting propriety, or what is honorable.

It is admitted, that sending out ships to plunder your neighbor or adversary is as much as mere words in making war. I don't like it. It is n't the *clean thing*. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 193.

A man may be the straight thing, that is, right up and down like a cow's tail; but hang me if he can be the *clean thing* any how he can fix it. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 53.

**CLEAN TICKET.** The entire regularly nominated ticket at an election; a ticket without any erasures. "He went the *clean ticket* on the Whig Nominations."

**CLEARING.** A place or tract of land cleared of wood for cultivation; a common use of the word in America. — *Webster*.

After we reached the boundaries of the *clearing* and plunged into the timbered land, this heat was exchanged for a grotto-like coolness. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 64.

**CLEARING HOUSE.** An establishment recently organized in the city of New York, where clerks from the various banks daily meet to settle the balances of their respective institutions.

**TO CLEAR OUT.** To take oneself off; to depart, decamp. A vulgar expression.

This thing of man-worship I am a stranger to; I don't like it; it taints every action of life; it is like a skunk getting into a house — long after he has *cleared out*, you smell him in every room and closet from the cellar to the garret. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 74.

I turned round, and was going to *clear out*. But, says he, Stop, Mister! — *Major Downing's May-day in New York*.

**CLEAR SWING.** Good opportunity. See *Full Swing*.

As soon as civilization arrives at years of discretion, we expect to see our cities purged of rowdiness, incentives to vice abated, and a *clear swing* and ample reward granted to labor and intelligence. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**TO CLERK, or TO CLERK IT.** To act in the capacity of a clerk. In common use at the West, and occasionally heard in New York.

Teaching, *clerking*, law, etc., are so very precarious except to men of established reputation and business, that it is next to madness for a youth to come here relying upon them. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 19, 1849.

Young Soublotte had been *clerking* down to the fort on the Platte, so he know'd something. — *Ruxton, Far West*, p. 17.

I was struck with the original mode in which the young gentleman who was *clerking* it managed his spelling. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 197.

**CLEVER.** The following are the English senses of this word as given by Dr. Worcester: Dexterous, skilful (*Addison*); just, fit, proper, commodious (*Pope*); well-shaped, handsome (*Arbuthnot*).

In the United States, *clever* is much used as a colloquial word in the sense of good-natured, well-disposed, honest; and the phrase "*clever man*" or "*clever fellow*," is employed to denote a person of good-nature, good disposition, or good intention. — *Worcester's Dictionary*.

The landlord of the hotel was a very *clever* man, and made me feel quite at home in his house. — *Crockett's Tour Down East*, p. 22.

It is related that an English lady arriving in New York, being recommended to take a servant girl who was described to her as *clever* but not *smart*, answered, that such a maid would suit her admirably. But she soon learned that her new acquisition was merely inoffensive and dull; whereas, she had expected one brisk and intelligent, without being showy or dressy. We sometimes hear the expressions "English clever" and "Yankee clever" used to indicate the sense in which the word is to be taken.

**CLEVERLY.** This is much used in some parts of New England, instead of *well* or *very well*. In answer to the common salutation, "How do you do?" we often hear, "I am *cleverly*." It is also used in the sense of fairly, completely.

The landlord comes to me, as soon as I was *cleverly* up this morning, looking full of importance. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 8.

**CLEVERNESS.** Mildness or agreeableness of disposition; obligingness; good nature. Used in New England. — *Webster*.

**CLEVIS, or CLEVY.** An iron, bent to the form of an ox-bow, with the two ends perforated to receive a pin, used on the end of a cart-neap, to hold the chain of the forward horse or oxen; or, a draft-iron on a plow. — *Webster*.

**CLIFF.** A part of the Silurian limestones of the West have been called "*Cliff* limestone," from the bold cliffs found on the banks of streams. The word much used in this way is usually pronounced *clifts* and hence the adjective *clifty*, frequently applied to streams as a proper name. Thus, "a *clifty* country" is one abounding in cliffs.

**CLIMB DOWN.** To climb, is to ascend, to mount, to rise; but in no sense to descend. Yet we sometimes find it used with the latter signification. Thus, Mr. H. Ward Beecher, in describing his visit to Oxford, says:

To *climb down* the wall was easy enough, too easy for a man who did not love wetting.

And again —

I partly *climbed down*, and wholly clambered back again, satisfied that it was easier to get myself in, than to get the flowers out — *Star Papers*, p. 41.

**CLINCKER BUILT.** A term applied to a class of boats in which the lower edge of every plank overlays the next under it, like clapboards on the side of a house. It is a variation of the English term *clinker-built*.

**CLING, or CLINGSTONE.** A variety of the peach in which the flesh adheres, or clings, firmly to the stone. When the stone readily separates

from the flesh, they are called *free-stones* or *open stones*. The word *peach* frequently designates the free-stone, while the others are called *clings*.

**CLIP.** A blow or stroke with the hand; as, "He hit him a *clip*."—*Webster*. Provincial in England and the Northern States.

**TO CLIP.** To cut, to run. Probably from the motion of a bird's wings, which strike or beat the air as it flies or runs.

Some falcon stoops at what her eye designed,  
And, with her eagerness the quarry missed,  
Straight flies at check, and *clips* it down the wind. — *Dryden*.

I had n't much time left, . . . . so I ran all the way, right down as hard as I could *clip*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 8.

**CLIPPER.** A cutter; a small schooner with raking masts, built and rigged with a view to fast sailing. Larger vessels are sometimes built after the same model, when they are said to be *clipper-built*.

**CLIPPER-SHIP.** Ships built in the clipper style, with a special view to quick voyages; clipper-built ships. They owed their origin to the immensely profitable trade which sprang up between the Atlantic sea-ports and San Francisco, soon after the occupation of California by Americans from the United States.

**CLITCHY.** Clammy, sticky, glutinous. — *Pickering's Vocab*. Mr. Pickering says, he has "heard this word used in a few instances by old people in New England; but it is rarely heard." In Devonshire, England, they use the verb *to clitch*, meaning to stick, to adhere, to become thick or glutinous. From this our word is evidently derived.

**CLOCKMUTCH.** (Dutch, *klapmuts*, a night-cap.) A woman's cap composed of three pieces, — a straight centre one, from the forehead to the neck, with two side pieces. A New York term.

**CLOTHIER.** A man whose occupation is to full and dress cloth. — *Webster*. In England, a *clothier* is one who makes or deals at wholesale in cloth. Mr. Pickering observes, that "although we use *clothier* for *fuller*, yet the place where the cloth is cleansed and dressed is called a *fulling-mill*."

**TO CLOUD UP.** To grow cloudy; to cloud over.

Although the morning was fine and pleasant, it *clouded up* before eight o'clock and commenced raining. — *Bryant's Journey to California*, p. 43.

**CLUB-TAIL.** The common shad, the fatter portion of which have the tail swollen, and on the coast of Carolina, where they are taken, are called *club-tails*. — *Nat. Hist. N. Y.*

**TO CLUTTER UP.** To crowd together in disorder, to fill with things in confusion; as, "to *clutter up* a room."

**COAL.** The English generally use the plural *coals*; and we as generally use the singular collectively. *Coals* with us may mean charcoal, in England, never.

**COAL-HOD.** A kettle for carrying coals to the fire. More frequently called, as in England, a *coal-scuttle*. Mr. Halliwell, in his Dic. of Prov., has *coal-hood*, a wooden coal-scuttle, a term which is used in the eastern part of England.

**TO COAST.** To slide down hill with sleds on the snow; a term used by boys in New England.

**COASTING.** The amusement of sliding down hill with sleds on the snow.

I guess aunt Libby never broke one of the runners of her sled some Saturday afternoon, when it was prime *coasting* — *Fanny Fern*.

**COAT.** Used in the South for *petticoat*. Formerly common, and still provincial, in England.

**COB.** The spike on which the kernels of maize, or Indian corn, grow. When the corn is attached to it, it is called an "ear." The old English word *cob*, the top or head (from the Saxon *cop*), is doubtless the origin of the term.

The following short but pithy dialogue is represented as passing between two Virginia negroes soon after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, at the siege of Yorktown:

*Mingo.* — Halloo, brudder Sam; how you do?

*Sam.* — O, don't know, brudder Mingo; mighty poorly.

*Mingo.* — Poorly! indeed! you no hear de news?

*Sam.* — No. What sorter news?

*Mingo.* — Why, don't you know dat are great man dey call Cornwallis?

*Sam.* — Yes, I hera nuff 'bout him shooting after white folks all over de country.

*Mingo.* — Well, I spose you know Gin'ral Washington?

*Sam.* — O, ycs! I know ole masser.

*Mingo.* — Well, I tell you what: he no Cornwallis now, he *Cobwallis*; Gin'ral Washington shell all de corn off him too slick. — *Cherokee Phoenix*, May 21, 1828.

**COBB.** A blow on the buttock. Wright, in his Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English, explains the word as follows: "A punishment used among seamen for petty offences or irregularities, by bastinadoing the offender on the posteriors with a cobbing-stick or pipe-staff."

Should any negro be found vending spirituous liquors, without permission from his owner, such negro so offending shall receive fifteen *cobbs* or paddles for every such offence, from the hands of the patrollers of the settlement or neighborhood in which the offence was committed. — *Cherokee Phoenix*, April 10, 1828.

**COBBLER.** 1. A drink made of wine, sugar, lemon, and pounded ice, and imbibed through a straw or other tube; as, a "sherry *cobbler*."

2. A sort of pie, baked in a pot lined with dough of great thickness, upon which the fruit is placed; according to the fruit, it is an apple or a peach *cobbler*. Western.

**COBBLE-STONE.** A roundish stone; a small boulder, such as is used for paving. Mr. Halliwell informs us that the word *cobble* is used in this sense in the North of England; and cites from old authors the terms *cobbled stones* and *cobbling stones*, which last suggests that the origin of the word is the use of such boulders by cobblers for a lapstone.

**COCKAROUSE.** A title of honor among the Indians of Virginia, and long afterwards used by the English settlers as a term for a person of consequence.

A *cockarouse* is one that has the honor to be of the king or queen's council, with relation to the affairs of government. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book III.

With spur of punch which lay in pate  
E'er long we lighted at the gate;  
Where, in an ancient cedar house,  
Dwelt my new friend, a *cockerouse*.

*The Sot-weed Factor; or, Along up to Maryland*, 1708.

**COCKTAIL.** A stimulating beverage, made of brandy or gin, mixed with sugar and a very little water.

In the American's Apostrophe to Bon Gaultier, addressed to Dickens, after his visit to the United States, he says:

Did we spare our brandy *cocktails*, stint thee of our whiskey-grogs?  
Half the juleps that we gave thee would have floored a Newnan Noggs.

*Book of Ballads.*

**COCO GRASS.** An insidious grass or weed much dreaded by Southern planters, as it will speedily overrun and ruin any field in which it takes root.

**COCOA-NUT.** The well-known fruit of the *Cocos nucifera*, a kind of palm which is a native of the West Indies and South America, as well as of the other parts of the world.

**COCOS, or EDDOES.** The tuberous root of the *Arum esculentum*, the principal dependence for a supply of food among the laboring population of the West Indies.

**CODDING.** Fishing for codfish. A common term in New England seaports, where vessels are fitted out for the purpose.

**COFFEE-HOUSE.** At the South and in some parts of the West, this term is used to signify a bar-room.



COFFEE-TREE, or KENTUCKY COFFEE-TREE. (*Gymnocladus canadensis*.)

An ornamental tree with valuable wood, the seeds of which were once used as a substitute for coffee.

COFFIN-BOAT. See *Battery*.

COHOSH, sometimes called Black Cohosh or Black Snake-root (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), a well-known medicinal plant. There are also White and Blue Cohosh, other allied plants.

White *cohush* will bring out the whelk in less than no time; and brook lime will break any fever. — *Margaret*, p. 375.

COLD, *adj.* Applied in a peculiar way to those who do not engage in some particular undertaking, e. g. a revival in a church (this seems to be the original use), a railroad company, a bank, or even a conspiracy to cheat some one. He who does not earnestly engage in it is said to be *cold*.

How many shales in the — Bank have been subscribed to-day? Why, Smith took ten and Jones twenty. And how many did Jackson take? Oh, he's *cold*, he'd only take one, provided I'd swap horses with him.

COLD AS PRESBYTERIAN CHARITY. I know not the origin of this saying, and am not aware that there is less charity in this sect than in any other.

They are *cold as Presbyterian charity*, and mean enough to put the sun in eclipse, are the English. — *Sam Slick in England*.

Why, Colonel, the river is pretty considerable for a run; but the water is *cool as Presbyterian charity*. — *Crockett's Tour*.

It was common in England, particularly during and after Cromwell's time, to ridicule the Presbyterians; thus Hudibras says:

When thou at any thing would'st rail  
Thou mak'st Presbytery thy scale.  
As if Presbytery were a standard  
To size whatever's to be slandered.

Part I Canto 3.

COLD FLOUR. A preparation made of Indian corn (maize) parched and pulverized, mixed with one third its quantity of sugar. Two or three teaspoonfuls of this compound stirred in a glass of water will answer for a meal when food is scarce. See *Nocake* and *Pinole*.

COLLECTOR. There are three principal officers in each of the large Custom Houses in this country, the Collector, Naval Officer, and Surveyor.

It is the duty of the *collector* to receive all manifests, reports, and documents required to be made or exhibited on the entry of any vessel or cargo; record all manifests, and, together with the naval officer, estimate the amount of duties payable on imports, indorsing the same on the respective entries; receive, or secure by bond, payment of duties; grant permits for the unloading or delivery of imports; and, with the approbation of the Secretary of the Treasury, employ persons as inspectors, weighers, gaugers, measurers, and clerks. — Act March 2, 1797.

**COLORED.** A term applied to persons who have negro blood in their veins.

**TO COME.** *To make come*, in Western parlance, applied to game, means to bring it down with your rifle.

Well, them English are darned fools, they can't fix a rifle any ways; but that one did shoot "some;" leastwise *he* made it throw plumb-centre. He *made* the buffer *come*, he did, and fout well at Pawnee Fork too.—*N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

*To make drunk come*, means to produce intoxication.

**TO COME AROUND.** To coax, wheedle, entice. *To get around* is used in the same sense.

Mrs. Truxton, besides doing the washing for a number of families, and making shrouds on funeral occasions, was a great stickler for equal marriages; and observed that "it was onaccountable to her that such a proper nice young man as Mr. Paddelford could be perverted on to go and marry sech a gal as that Sally Ann Lynes." "But yet," she continued, as though she had reflected further on the subject, "I can tell you how it's all been brought about; they've *come around* that young man, they've *come around* him. Oh, don't I know that old Mrs Lyons," (she meant Sally Ann's mother,) "she's cunning as a shark."—*A Wedding at Nutmegville*.

**TO COME OUT.** 1. An expression used among certain religious enthusiasts, meaning to make an open profession of religion.

I experienced religion at one of brother Armstrong's protracted meetin's. Them special efforts is great things—ever since I *come out*, I've felt like a new critter.—*Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 108.

2. "How did you *come out*?" means, how did you fare in your undertaking? *Come off* would be more agreeable to English usage. *To come out at the little end of the horn*, means to fare badly, to fail.

Can you wonder that the blue noses who keep such an unprofitable stock *came out at the small eend of the horn* in the long run.—*Sam Slick*, 1st series.

**COME-OUTERS.** This name has been applied to a considerable number of persons in various parts of the Northern States, principally in New England, who have recently *come out* of the various religious denominations with which they have been connected; hence the name. They have not themselves assumed any distinctive organization. They have no creed, believing that every one should be left free to hold such opinions on religious subjects as he pleases, without being held accountable for the same to any human authority.

They hold a diversity of opinions on many points—some believing in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and others that they are but human compositions. They believe Jesus Christ to have been a divinely inspired teacher, and his religion, a revelation of eternal truth; that according to his teachings, true religion consists in purity of heart, holi-

ness of life, and not in opinions; that Christianity, as it existed in Christ, is a life rather than a belief.—*Evans's History of Religions, with Additions by an American Editor.*

I am a Christian man of the sect called *come-outers*, and have had experience; and when I meet the brethren, sometimes I speak a word in season.—*S. Shick, Human Nature.*

**TO COME OVER.** *To come over*, or *come it over* one, means to get the advantage of one. Vulgar.

**TO COME UP TO THE CHALK.** To come up to the mark, i. e. to do one's duty, fulfil one's promises.

**COMMISSIONER.** A government officer, the next in rank to a Secretary. Thus the *Commissioner* of Patents, the *Commissioner* of the Land Office, and the *Commissioner* of Indian Affairs, are subordinates of the Secretary of the Interior.

**COMMON.** "As well as *common*," is an expression much in use for "as well as usual."

**COMMON DOINGS.** Originally employed in the West to designate plain or common food in opposition to dainties; but now applied to persons, actions, or things in general of an inferior kind. See *Chicken Fixings*.

**COMMONER.** "The great *Commoner*," is an epithet often applied to Henry Clay.

**COMPLECTED.** Of a certain complexion, colored in the face. Western.

That lady is mighty pale *complected*. I'm afeard she's consumpted; she's always complaining of some misery.—*Western Sketches.*

You're rather dark *complected*, and blue is a trying color for dark skins.—*Widow Bedott Papers.*

**COMPLIMENT.** A present. South-Western.

**CONCAGEER.** A name applied to the small lizards and salamanders of the United States.

**CONCERN.** In mercantile usage, an establishment or firm for the transaction of business. It is provincial in England and Ireland, where it denotes a small estate; business.

**CONCERNED.** (Pron., *consarned*.) A euphonistic Yankeeism, equivalent to deuced, devilish, i. e. very, greatly.

You can keep your money. I'm *consarned* sorry for it, but I must take that ar yaller gal back with me.—*A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 51.

**TO CONDUCT,** instead of "to conduct *oneself*;" leaving out the reflexive

pronoun. This offensive barbarism is happily confined to New England, where it is common both in speech and writing. Like some other expressions in the same predicament, it has received the tacit sanction of Dr. Webster, himself a New England man.

**CONDUCTOR.** The man who takes the fare, and has charge generally of a railroad train.

**CONESTOGA HORSE.** A heavy draught horse well known in the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Before the introduction of railroads, they were the great carriers of produce from the interior of Pennsylvania to the sea-board. Six and sometimes more of these noble animals attached to a huge white-topped waggon were a marked feature in the landscape of this State. They originated in Pennsylvania, towards the close of the last century, and are believed to have descended from a mixture of the Flemish cart-horse with an English breed. — *Herbert, Horse and Horsemanship.*

**CONESTOGA WAGGON.** A waggon of the kind described in the preceding article, first made in Conestoga, a township of Lancaster county, Pennsylvania.

**CONFECTIONARY.** In the South-west and some parts of the West, a bar-room.

**CONGRESS.** This term is applied by us especially to three differently constituted bodies of representatives of the people that have succeeded each other in the government of the country. The first is the *Continental Congress*, assembled in 1774, and which conducted the national affairs until near the close of the Revolution. The second is the *Federal Congress*, which met under the Articles of Confederation, adopted March, 1781, and ruled the country till 1789. The third is the *Congress of the United States*, which first met under the Constitution, on the 4th of March, 1789.

Mr. Pickering remarks, that English writers, in speaking of American affairs, generally say, "*the Congress*," using the article. Such was formerly our own practice; but in the course of time it has acquired with us the force of a proper name, so that we now speak of *Congress*, as the English speak of *Parliament*. When the present Constitution was adopted, the usage was still fluctuating, as the following examples will show:

*The Congress* shall assemble at least once in every year; and such meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day. — *Art. 1. Sec. 4.*

Neither House, during the session of *Congress*, shall, without the consent of the

other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting. — *Art. 1, Sec 5.*

**CONGRESSIONAL.** Pertaining to a congress, or to the Congress of the United States; as, congressional debates. — *Webster.*

The *congressional* institution of Amphictyons, in Greece. — *Barton.*

The conflict between *congressional* and State authority, originated with the creation of those authorities. — *Marshall, Life of Washington.*

**CONGRESSMAN.** A member of Congress.

Our *congressmen*, my dear hearers, what are they? Nothing but bloodsuckers upon the cheek of the United States. They talk and drink for eight dollars a day, and you have to stand the treat. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. 3, p. 137.

**CONIACKER.** A counterfeiter of coin.

**CONNECTICUT.** One of the New England States, and the name of a river.

It was variously spelled by the early colonists, *Quonectacut*, *Quonaugh-ticut*, *Conecticot*, etc.; and is said to mean, in the Mohegan language, a long river.

**CONNER.** See *Burgall*.

**CONNIPTION FIT.** This term is exclusively used by the fair sex, who can best explain its meaning. Ex. "George, if you keep coming home so late to dinner, I shall have a *conniption*." As near as I can judge, *conniption fits* are tantrums.

Sam Slick, in his visit to a "female college," made proposals to the "presidentess," which she at first imagined was for her hand. On discovering her error, she fainted and fell into a *conniption fit*. — *Nature and Human Nature.*

**CONSIDERABLE.** 1. A good deal. This word is frequently used in the following manner in the Northern States: "He is *considerable* of a surveyor;" " *Considerable* of it may be found in the country." — *Pickering.*

Parson Tuttle's *considerable* of a man; but in my opinion he won't never be able to hold a candle to Elder Sniffles. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 128.

2. Pretty, considerably. A common vulgarity.

A body has to stir about *considerable* smart in this country, to make a livin', I tell you. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 6.

**TO CONSOCIATE.** To unite in an assembly or convention, as pastors and messengers or delegates of churches. — *Webster.*

**CONSOCIATION.** Fellowship or union of churches by their pastors and delegates; a meeting of the pastors and delegates of a number of congregational churches, for aiding and supporting each other, and forming an advisory council in ecclesiastical affairs. — *Webster.* *Consociation* of churches is their mutual and solemn agreement to exercise communion in such acts as aforesaid, amongst themselves, with special reference to those churches, etc. — *Result of the Synod*, 1662.

**CONSTABLE.** Mr. Webster notices the following distinction between the application of this word in England and in the United States: "In England there are high constables, petty constables, and constables of London. In the United States *constables* are town or city officers of the peace, with powers similar to those possessed by the constables in Great Britain." Mr. Pickering says that "in many of the cities, boroughs, and other local jurisdictions in England, they have peace officers called *constables*, whose powers are not materially, if at all, different from those of our constables."

**CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES.** The officers of government collectively, in a kingdom, city, town, etc. This expression has been adopted by some of our writers from the vocabulary of the French Revolution. — *Pickering*.

Neither could he perceive danger to liberty except from the *constituted authorities*, and especially from the executive. — *Marshall's Washington*.

**CONSTITUTIONALITY.** Used chiefly in political language, to signify the state of being agreeable to the constitution of a State or of the United States.

The argument upon this question has naturally divided itself into two parts, the one of *expediency*, the other of *constitutionality*. — *Debates in Congress in 1802*.

The judges of the Supreme Court of the United States have the power of determining the *constitutionality* of laws — *Webster*.

**TO CONTEMPLATE.** To consider or have in view, in reference to a future act or event; to intend. — *Webster*. This sense of the word is not found in Johnson or Richardson.

If a treaty contains any stipulations which *contemplate* a state of future war. — *Kent's Commentaries*.

**CONTEMPLATION.** Mr. Pickering considers that the phrase, "I *have it in contemplation* to do such a thing," for "I *intend* to do such a thing," is used both in England and in this country, but more frequently in the latter.

**CONTINENTAL.** A word much used during the Revolution to designate what appertained to the Colonies as a whole. This originated before the Declaration of Independence, when the term "United States" was employed; yet, *continental*, variously applied, was used during the war, as "*continental troops*," "*continental money*," etc. Mr. Irving, in his Life of Washington, in speaking of the organization of the American army, says: "Many still clung to the idea, that in all these proceedings they were merely opposing the measures of the ministry, and not the authority of the crown; and thus the army before Boston was designated as the

*Continental* army, in contradistinction to that under General Gage, which was called the Ministerial army."

This word will remind every one of the famous reply of Col. Ethan Allen, when asked by what authority he summoned Fort Ticonderoga to surrender. "I demand it," said he, "in the name of the great Jehovah and of the *Continental* Congress!"

CONTRAPTION. Contrivance, device. A factitious word local in England.

TO CONVENE. This is used in some parts of New England in a very strange sense; that is, *to be convenient*, fit, or suitable. Ex. "This road will *convene* the public," i. e. will be convenient for the public. The word, however, is used only by the illiterate. — *Pickering*. I have never heard the phrase.

CONVENIENT, used to signify "near at hand," "easy of access," is an Irishism frequently pointed out by English critics, which found its way even into President Polk's last message, where it is applied to timber for ship-building in the neighborhood of San Francisco.

CONVENTION. The general or diocesan synod of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

COODIES. The name of a political sect in the State of New York, which originated in the year 1814. At that time a series of well-written articles appeared in a New York paper, signed *Abimeleck Coody*. He professed to be a mechanic. "He was a federalist, and addressed himself principally to the party to which he belonged. He endeavored to show the impropriety of opposing the war, and urged them to come forward in defence of their country. He also attacked De Witt Clinton with great severity." The writer was ascertained to be Mr. Gulian C. Verplanck, then, as now, distinguished for his talents. He was replied to by a writer under the signature of "A Traveller," said to be De Witt Clinton, who thus speaks of this party: "The political sect called the *Coodies*, of hybrid nature, is composed of the combined spawn of Federalism and Jacobinism, and generated in the venomous passions of disappointment and revenge, without any definite character; neither fish nor flesh nor bird nor beast, but a nondescript made up of 'all monstrous, all prodigious things.'" — *Hammond's Polit. Hist. of N. Y.*

COOKEY. (Dutch, *koekje*.) A little cake. Used in New York. A *New-Year's Coockey* is a peculiar cake made only in New York, and at the Christmas holidays. In the olden time, each visitor, on New-Year's day, was expected to take one of these cakes. The custom is still practised to a considerable extent.

Mrs. Child thinks it best to let the little dears have their own way in every thing,

and not to give them more *cookies* than they, the dear children, deem requisite. — *Sunday Mercury*, N. Y.

**COOLING-BOARD.** The board on which a dead body is laid out. Pennsylvania and Maryland.

**COOLWORT.** (*Tharella cordifolia*.) The popular name of an herb, the properties of which are diuretic and tonic. It is prepared for sale by the Shakers.

**\*COON.** 1. A popular contraction of *raccoon*, the name of an animal.

2. A nickname applied to members of the Whig party, which adopted the raccoon as an emblem.

Democrats, freemen! keep your council-fires brightly burning. Let no one remain listless, or doubt, or hesitate; "push on your columns," rout the *coons*, beat them, overwhelm them, and let the welkin ring with the soul-stirring tidings that Massachusetts is safe—free from the curse of whiggery. — *Boston Post*.

**COON'S AGE.** A long time; as, "I have not been there in a *coon's age*."

The backwoodsman jumps from his horse, and, slapping the grave-looking gentleman on the back, says: "Hallo, old hoss, whar have you been this *coon's age*?" and they go in and wood up [i. e. drink]. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

This child haint had much money in a *coon's age*. — *Southern Sketches*.

**COONER.** A common term, at the South, for a canoe.

**COONERY.** Whiggery. See *Coon*, No. 2.

Democrats of the old Bay State, one charge more and the work is thoroughly done. "Once more to the breach," and you will hear the shouts of Democratic victory, and the lamentations of the vanquished. We must achieve a victory—the people must be free—*coonery* must fall with all its corruptions and abominations, never more to rise. — *Boston Post*.

**COONTIE ADKA, or COONTIE CHATTA.** The name of an arrow-root preparation obtained from the root of *Zamia integrifolia* by the Indians in Florida, where the plant is indigenous.

**COOPING OF VOTERS.** Collecting and confining them, several days previous to an election, in a house or on a vessel hired for the purpose. Here they are treated with good living and liquors, and at a proper day are taken to the polls and "voted," as it is called, for the party.

**COOT.** The name of a small water-fowl which lives in marshes, and, when closely pursued, buries its head in the mud. It is often applied by us to a stupid person; as, "He is a poor *coot*." Mr. Halliwell notices the old proverbial saying, "As stupid as a *coot*."

Little *coot*! don't you know the Bible is the best book in the world? — *Margaret*, p. 134.



**COPPER.** A copper coin, especially a British halfpenny or American cent.

My friends filled my pockets with *coppers*. — *Franklin*.

**COPPERHEAD.** (*Trigonocephalus contortrix*.) A poisonous serpent, whose bite is considered as deadly as that of the rattlesnake. Its geographical range extends from 45° north latitude to Florida. It has various other popular names, as Copper-belly, Red Viper, Red Adder, Deaf Adder, Dumb Rattlesnake, Chunk-head.

**CORAL BERRY.** (*Symphoricarpus vulgaris*.) The Indian Currant of Missouri.

**CORD.** A large quantity. Western.

**CORDELLE.** (French.) A tow-line. Western.

The propelling power of the keel-boat is by oars, sails, setting-poles, the *cordelle*, etc. — *Flint, Hist. of Miss. Valley*.

**TO CORDELLE.** To drag by a tow-line.

We were obliged to *cordelle* the boat along the left shore. — *Fremont's Report*.

**CORDUROY ROAD.** A road or causeway constructed with logs laid together over swamps or marshy places. When properly finished, earth is thrown between them, by which the road is made smooth; but in newly settled parts of the United States they are often left uncovered, and hence are extremely rough and bad to pass over with a carriage. Sometimes they extend many miles. They derive their name from their resemblance to a species of ribbed velvet, called *corduroy*.

**CORKED.** A term applied to wine which has acquired a taste of the cork.

**CORN.** (*Zea mays*.) Maize, throughout the United States, is called *Indian corn*, or simply *corn*.

In England the term *corn* is applied generically to wheat, barley, and other small grains. For this we use the term *grain*.

**CORN AND COB MILL.** A mill for grinding the entire ear of Indian corn.

**CORN-BASKET.** A large basket for carrying the ears of maize. — *Webster*.

**CORN-BLADE.** The leaf of the maize. Corn-blades are collected and used as fodder in some of the Southern States. — *Webster*.

**CORN-BREAD.** Unleavened bread made from the meal of Indian corn.

**CORN-BROOMS.** Brooms made from the tops of a species of corn, called Broom-Corn.

**CORN-COB.** See *Cob*.

Byron is said to have remarked, that "the greatest trial to a woman's beauty is

the ungraceful act of eating eggs." Some Yankee rejoices that the poet could never have seen a lady hanging on by the teeth to a blazing hot *corn-cob*. — *Balt. Sun*.

**CORN-CRACKER.** The nickname for a native of Kentucky.

**CORN-CRIB.** A structure raised some feet from the ground, and with sides made of slats some distance apart, or of lattice-work, to admit the air. In it the dried ears of maize are kept.

**CORN-DODGER.** A kind of cake made of Indian corn, and baked very hard. It is sometimes simply called *dodger*. Much used in the South.

The universal food of the people of Texas, both rich and poor, seems to be *corn-dodger* and fried bacon — *Olmstead, Texas*.

The Sucker State, the country of vast projected railroads, good *corn-dodgers*, splendid banking-houses, and poor currency. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 28.

He opened a pouch which he wore on his side, and took from thence one or two *corn-dodgers* and half a broiled rabbit, which his wife had put up for hunting provisions. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 170.

**CORN-FIELD.** A field where maize, or Indian corn, is growing.

**CORN-HUSK, or CORN-SHUCK.** The coarse outer leaves which enclose the ear of Indian corn.

**CORN-HUSKING, or CORN-SHUCKING.** An occasion on which a farmer invites the young people of the neighborhood to his house or barn, to aid him in stripping the husks from his corn. See *Husking*.

There was a *corn-husking*, and I went along with Sal Stebbins. There was all the gals and boys settin' round, and I got sot down so near Sal Babit, that I'll be damed if I did n't kiss her afore I know'd what I was about. — *Traits of American Humor*.

**CORN-JUICE.** Whiskey. A Western term.

I informed the old fellow that Tom wanted a fight; and as he was too full of *corn-juice* to cut carefully, I did n't want to take advantage of him. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Old Monongahela whiskey.

Whiskey made of Indian *corn-juice*. — *Pluribustah*.

**CORN PONE.** A superior kind of corn-bread, made with milk and eggs and baked in a pan.

**CORN-SHUCK.** The Southern term for *corn-husk*, which see.

You can have a mattress of bar-skin to sleep on, and a wild-cat skin pulled off whole, stuffed with *corn-shucks*, for a pillow. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

**CORN-SHUCKING.** The Southern term for *corn-husking*, which see.

The young people were all gibberin' and talkin' and laughin', as if they'd been to a *corn-shuckin'*, more 'n to a meetin' house. — *Major Jones*.

**CORN-SNAKE.** The *Coleuber guttatus* of the Southern States.

**CORN-STALK.** A stalk of corn, particularly the stalk of the maize. —

*Webster.* Mr. Pickering says, "The farmers of New England use this term, and more frequently the simple term *stalks*, to denote the upper part of the stalks of Indian corn (above the ear), which is cut off while green, and then dried to make fodder for their cattle." — *Vocabulary*.

**CORN-STALK FIDDLE.** A child's plaything, made by loosening the external fibre of a corn-stalk, and placing a bridge under each extremity.

There is no more sentiment in the soul of an old bachelor, than there is music in a *corn-stalk fiddle*. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**CORNED.** Drunk. (Low.) — *Grose*.

**CORNER.** When a party is made up to buy a large amount of stock, a larger quantity than is known to be at the time in the market, it is called a *corner*. The plan is generally kept very private. As soon as the clique is formed, the brokers purchase gradually large lots of stock on time, "buyer's option." After this has been fixed, they sell on time, "seller's option," if possible nearly to the extent of their purchases on buyer's option. The object of this is to provide a market for this stock after the corner has run out. This having been all arranged, the clique commence buying for cash, and in so doing put up prices rapidly. Having inflated the market pretty well, they make a sudden call for several thousand shares of stock on their buyer's option, and then there comes a sharp time among the sellers, who are generally all short. This creates an active demand, and the clique sell their cash stock to the bears or shorts, who purchase at high rates for delivery at much lower prices to the very parties selling. — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, Vol. 37.

**TO CORNER.** 1. To *corner* a person is to get the advantage of him in an argument, as though he were physically placed in a corner from which he could not escape. This use of the word can hardly be an Americanism; yet it is not found in the English dictionaries.

2. A Wall street word, which means to artificially raise the price of stock in the manner described in the article *Corner*.

There is a large class of brokers in Wall street, who sometimes control a good deal of money, and who make speculation their business. These generally unite in squads for the purpose of *cornering*, — which means, that they first get the control of some particular stock, and then, by making a great many contracts on time, compel the parties to pay whatever difference they choose, or rather what they can get; for they sometimes overrate the purse of those they contract with. — *A Week in Wall Street*, p. 81.

The remarkable fluctuations in the stock-market are chiefly the result of a successful *cornering* operation. — *N. Y. Journal of Com.*

The Erie Railroad *cornering* has been a very unfortunate affair for many members of the board. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**CORNER-GROCERY.** A grocer's shop on the corner of two streets, a favorite location for such establishments in American towns.

CORNER-TREES. See *Witness-trees*.

CORP. A corpse is so called in Pennsylvania.

CORRAL. (Spanish.) A pen or place of security for horses and cattle in the form of a circle, often temporarily made with waggons, etc., by parties of emigrants crossing the prairies. The area of this circle is sufficiently large to permit the horses and cattle to graze during the night. On the outside of the *corral* the tents are pitched, with their doors outward; and in front of these the camp-fires are lighted. — *Texas and New Mexico*. This is evidently the same as the Dutch *Kraal*, which in Southern Africa is used, like the Spanish, both as a noun and a verb.

Among the trees, in open spaces, were drawn up the waggons, formed into a *corral*, or square, and close together, so that the whole made a most formidable fort, and, when filled with some hundred rifles, could defy the attacks of Indians or Mexicans. — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 177.

I lost a portion of my cattle, which broke through the *kraal* in the night, and were never again heard of. — *Anderson's Lake Ngami*, p. 360.

The hyenas were in the habit of harassing the goat-kids, which for security were *kraalled* against the wall of the house. — p. 356.

TO CORRAL. To *corral* cattle is to secure them in an enclosure, to pen them.

During the stay of the Indians, the animals were all collected and *corralled*, as their penchant for horse-flesh might lead some of the young men to appropriate a horse or a mule — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 238.

Well, as soon as the animals were unhitched from the waggons, the governor sends out a strong guard, seven boys, and old hands at that. It was pretty nigh upon sundown, and Bill had just sung out to *corral*. The boys were drivin' in the animals, and we were all standin' round to get 'm in slick, when "howgh-owgh-owgh-ough" we hears right behind the bluff, and 'bout a minute and a perfect crowd of Injuns gallops down upon the animals. — *Western Adventures*.

COTBETTY. A man who meddles in the woman's part of household affairs. North and East. It is probably of English origin. Halliwell and Wright give both *cot* and *cot-quean* with the same meaning.

COTCH, for caught. A Negro vulgarism.

Snake baked a hoe-cake,  
Left a frog to watch it;  
Frog went to sleep,  
Lizard come and *cotch* it. — *Virginia Negro Song*.

COTTON-BAGGING. A coarse hempen cloth, chiefly manufactured in Kentucky, for packing cotton in. Sometimes called simply Bagging.

COTTON-MOUTH. A poisonous snake of Arkansas.

**COTTONOCRACY.** A term applied to the Boston manufacturers, especially by the "Boston Whig" newspaper.

**COTTON ROCK.** A variety of Magnesian limestone, of a light buff or gray color, found in Missouri. It is very soft when fresh from the quarry, and can be easily wrought for building purposes. — *Swallow's Geology of Missouri.*

**COTTONWOOD.** (*Populus monilifera*.) A species of poplar, so called from the cotton-like substance surrounding the seeds, which grows on the margins of lakes and streams from New England to Illinois and southward, especially westward. In Texas and New Mexico it is called Alamo.

**COUGAR.** See *Puma*.

**COULEE.** (French.) A narrow rocky valley of great depth, with inclined sides, and from ten to fifty miles in length, distinguished from a *cañon*, which has precipitous sides. They occur in Oregon.

**COUNCIL FIRE.** The sacred fire kept burning while the Indians hold their councils.

**TO COUNT.** To reckon; suppose; think.

*Newman.* — You'll pass muster! a proper fine fellow.

*Doolittle.* — I calculate I be.

*Newman.* — Ready to enter on duty?

*Doolittle.* — I should be glad to know what kind of way you *count* to improve me. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England.*

*Count St. Luc.* — Read the superscription. You can read?

*Doolittle.* — I *count* I can, — and spell, too. — *Ibid.*

**TO COUNTER-BRAND.** To destroy a brand by branding on the opposite side. In the prairie regions of the South-west the calves are marked by cropping their ears, the cross as well as the brand of each stock-owner being recorded in the county records. When cattle are a year old, they are branded; and if afterwards sold, the same brand is burnt in on the opposite side, thus destroying the original title.

**COUNTER-JUMPER.** A clerk in a retail "store," whose place is behind a counter.

With physical forces developed in the school of slavish endurance, and mind untasked and neglected, what wonder the farmer's boy deems the life of a city *counter-jumper* close upon the confines of heaven! — *Essay by L. P. Harvey, 1852.*

**COUNTY.** "In speaking of *counties*," says Mr. Pickering, "the names of which are composed of the word *shire*, we say the *county* of *Hampshire*, the *county* of *Berkshire*, etc. In England they would say either *Hampshire* or *Berkshire* simply, without the word *county*; or, the county of *Hants*, the county of *Berks*, etc. The word *shire* of itself, as every-

body knows, means *county*; and in one instance (in Massachusetts), this latter word is used instead of *shire*, as a part of the name: 'The county of *Duke's County*.' — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**COUPLE.** A *couple* of any thing sometimes means a few; as, "Shall I go to market and get a *couple* of cherries?" Pennsylvania.

**COUPON.** A financial term, which, together with the practice, is borrowed from France. In the United States, the certificates of State stocks drawing interest are accompanied by *coupons*, which are small tickets attached to the certificates. At each term when the interest falls due, one of these *coupons* is cut off (whence the name); and this being presented to the State treasurer, or to a bank designated by him, entitles the holder to receive the interest. The *coupons* attached to the bonds of some of the Western States have not been cut off for several years. They are also called Interest Warrants.

**COURT.** In New England this word is applied to a legislative body composed of a House of Representatives and a Senate; as, the *General Court* of Massachusetts.

**COURT-HOUSE.** The county towns of Virginia are often called so without regard to their proper names. Thus Providence, the county town of Fairfax, is unknown by that name, and passes as *Fairfax Court-House*; Culpepper *Court-House* has superseded its proper name of Fairfax, more common in Lower Virginia. The same practice has existed to some extent in Maryland. Thus, after the battle of Bladensburg, and the dispersion of our forces, they were ordered to assemble at "*Montgomery Court-House*."

**COVE.** A strip of prairie extending into the woodland.

**COVERCLIP.** (Genus *Achilus*. Lacepède.) The popular name of the sole, a fish common in the waters of New York. *Calico* is another name for it. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**COVERLID.** A corruption of *coverlet*. (Fr. *couvre-lit*.) A bed-quilt, counterpane.

Her bed consisted of a mattress of beech-leaves spread on the floor, with tow and wool *coverlids*. — *Margaret*, p. 12.

**COWBIRD, OR COWPEN BIRD.** (*Icterus pecoris*.) A bird allied to the Crow Blackbird and Orchard Oriole. So called from its often alighting on the backs of cattle and searching for worms in their dung.

**COWBERRY.** (*Vaccinium vitisidæa*.) A plant resembling the common cranberry, but larger. It is found on certain mountains in Massachusetts. — *Bigelow's Flora Bostoniensis*.

**COWBOYS.** A contemptuous appellation applied to some of the tory partisans of Westchester Co., New York, during the Revolutionary war, who were exceedingly barbarous in the treatment of their opponents who favored the American cause.

**COW-CATCHER.** A contrivance fixed in front of a locomotive to take up cattle or other obstacles, and prevent them from getting beneath the wheels and throwing the cars off the track.

**COWHIDE, or COWSKIN.** A particular kind of whip made of twisted strips of raw hide; it is also called a Raw Hide.

**To COWHIDE.** To flog with a cowhide, or cowskin.

To be out of office and in for a *cowhiding* is not a pleasant change from eight dollars a day and all sorts of nice pickings. [Alluding to an ex-member of Congress.]—*N. Y. Tribune*.

**COW-LEASE.** A right of pasturage for a cow in a common pasture. Used in some towns of New England.—*Pickering's Vocabulary*. Provincial in the West of England.—*Grose's Glossary*.

**COW PARSNIP.** (*Heracleum latanum*.) The popular name of a plant, classed among the herbs prepared by the "Shakers," as containing properties carminative and diuretic.

**COYOTE.** (Mexican, *coyotl*.) The prairie-wolf (*Canis latrans*).

**COYOTE DIGGINGS.** Small shafts sunk by the gold miners in California, so called from their resemblance to the holes dug or occupied by the coyote. This animal lives in cracks and crevices made in the plains by the intense summer heat.

The *coyote diggings* require to be very rich to pay, from the great amount of labor necessary before any pay-dirt can be obtained.—*Borthwick's California*, p. 138.

**CRAB GRASS.** (Gen. *Digitaria*.) A species of grass which grows spontaneously in the cultivated fields of Louisiana and Texas, is very injurious to the crops, and yet makes excellent fodder, being equal to the best English hay. In appearance it resembles the Orchard grass of the North.

**CRACKER.** 1. A little paper cylinder filled with powder, imported from China; called also a Fire-cracker. It receives its name from the noise it produces in exploding. In England it is called a *squib*.

2. A small water biscuit. So called also in the North of England.

3. A nickname, applied to the poor white people of Georgia and South Carolina, otherwise called *Sandhillers*, which see.

"I was amused enough," said Nina, "with Old Hundred's indignation at having

got out the carriage and horses to go over to what he called a *Cracker funeral*." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 152.

**CRACKLINGS.** 1. Cinders, the remains of a wood fire; a word used in the Southern States.

When it lightened so, she said t' other end of the world was afire, and we'd all be burnt to *cracklun's* before morning. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

2. The crisp residue of hog fat after the lard is fried out. It is kept for kitchen use. *Crackling-bread* is corn-bread interspersed with cracklings. In England, *crackling* is the crisp rind of roast pork.

Well, fetch up your nag. I am perhaps a leetle, just a leetle, of the best man at a horse swap that ever stole *crackluns* out of his mammy's fat gourd. Where's your hoss? — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. I.

**CRADLE-SCYTHE.** Called also simply a *cradle*. It consists of a common scythe with a light frame-work attached, corresponding in form with the scythe. It is used for cutting grain, instead of the sickle; and enables the farmer to perform treble the work that could be accomplished with the latter implement. On large farms it is now superseded by the still more efficient Reaping Machine.

**TO CRADLE.** To *cradle* grain is to cut it in the same manner that grass is cut or mowed with the implement above described.

The operation of *cradling* is worth a journey to see. The sickle may be more classical; but it cannot compare in beauty with the swaying, regular motion of the cradle. — *Mrs. Clavers, Western Clearings*.

**CRADLE.** A machine resembling a child's cradle used in washing out the auriferous earth of California. Also called a Rocker.

**CRAMP-BARK.** (*Viburnum oxyccoccus*.) The popular name of a medicinal plant; its properties are anti-spasmodic. It bears a fruit intensely acid. In New England it is called the Tree Cranberry.

**CRANK.** Sure, confident.

If you strong electioners did n't think you were among the elect, you would n't be so *crank* about it. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 317.

**CRANKY.** 1. Unsteady, as the gait of a tipsy man.  
2. Queer, crotchety.

**CRASH.** (Germ. *Oreas*.) A coarse kind of linen cloth used for towels.

Margaret was up early in the morning. She washed at the cistern, and wiped herself on a coarse *crash* towel. — *Margaret*, p. 17.

**CRAWFISH.** (*Astacus bartonii*.) 1. The popular name of the freshwater lobster.



2. A political renegade. In English parliamentary phrase, "a rat."

**TO CRAWFISH.** To back out from a position once taken; particularly applied to politicians, evidently from the mode of progression of the animal. Western. The English term is "to rat."

We acknowledge the corn, and retreat, retrograde, *crawfish*, or climb down, in as graceful a style as the circumstances of the case will admit. — *Cairo Times*.

**CRAWFISHY.** A term applied to wet land, because inhabited by crawfish. See *Spouty*.

**CREATURE.** In the plural number this word is in very common use among farmers as a general term for horses, oxen, etc. Ex. "The *creatures* will be put into the pasture to-day." — *Pickering*. In the South, a horse is generally called a *critter*; while, to other animals, the term *stock* is applied.

The owners or claimers of any such *creatures* [i. e. "swine, neat cattle, horses, or sheep"], impounded as aforesaid, shall pay the fees, etc. — *Provincial Laws of Mass.* — *Statute 10, Wm. III.*

**TO CREASE.** To shoot an animal so that the bullet will cut the skin on the upper part of the neck, without doing any serious injury. When a horse cannot be caught, he is frequently *creased*. Although he is not much hurt, he will fall at the touch of the bullet, and remain quiet and powerless until his pursuers secure him. Used only in the West.

Finding it impossible to get within noosing distance [of the wild horse], and seeing that his horse was receding and growing alarmed, Beattie slid down from the saddle, levelled his rifle across the back of his mare, and took aim, with the intention of *creasing* him. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**CREEK.** A small river or brook. In New York, the Middle and Western States, and in Canada, a small stream is called a *creek*. The term is incorrectly applied; as its original signification, according to the dictionaries, is a small port, a bay or cove; from which it has gradually been extended to small rivers.

**CREASOTE PLANT.** (*Larrea mexicana*.) This plant abounds from the Arkansas to the Rio del Norte, and in the sandy deserts of California. It is characterized by a resinous matter of powerful odor. Animals refuse to eat it. It is employed as an external application in rheumatism.

**CREEPERS.** Pieces of iron, furnished with sharp points and strapped under the feet, to prevent one falling when walking upon ice. The term is said to mean "low pattens" in Norfolk, England.

**CREOLE.** In the West Indies, in Spanish America, and in the Southern States, one born of European parents; but as now used in the South it is applied to every thing that is native, peculiar to, or raised there.

In the New Orleans market one may hear of *creole* corn, *creole* chickens, *creole* cattle, and *creole* horses. In that city, too, a *creole* is a native of French extraction, as pure in pedigree as a Howard; and great offence has been given by strangers applying the term to a good-looking mulatto or quadroon.

**CREVASSE.** (French.) The breaking away of the embankments or levees on the lower Mississippi by a pressure of the water.

**CRISS-CROSS.** A game played on slates by children at school; also called Fox and Geese.

**CRITTERS**, for *creatures*, is a common vulgarism in pronunciation.

You hear folks say, such a man is an ugly grained *critter*, he'll break his wife's heart, just as if a woman's heart was as brittle as a pipe-stalk. — *Sam Slick*.

**CROAKER.** A small and very beautiful fish, found in great abundance in the bays and inlets of the Gulf of Mexico. It derives its name from a peculiar croaking sound, which it utters when taken.

**CROCK.** (Ang. Sax. *crocca*.) 1. An earthen vessel, a pot, or pitcher, a cup. — *Webster*. This old English word is still used in many parts of the country.

Therefore the vulgar did about him focke,  
Like foolish flies into an honey crocke.  
*Spenser, F. Queen, V. 2. 33.*

2. The black of a pot; smut, the dust of soot or coal. This word is provincial in various parts of England, and is there used precisely as in the United States.

At one of our frolics, there was one long-haired fellow looked as though he'd been among the pots and kettles, and got a great gob of *crock* on his upper lip. — *Lafayette Chron.*

3. (Fr. *croc*.) A large moustache turned up (i. e. hooked) at the ends.

**TO CROCK.** To black with soot or other matter collected from combustion, or to black with the coloring matter of cloth. — *Webster*.

Provincial in Norfolk and Suffolk, England.

**CROOKED STICK.** A cross-grained, perverse person.

So as I ain't a *crooked-stick*, just like, like old (I swow,  
I do n't know as I know his name) — I'll go back to my plough.

*Biglow Papers.*

The widow R—— must have been dreadfully put to it for a husband, to take up with such a *crooked stick* as Elder B——. — *Major Downing*.

TO CROOK. 2. To *crook* one's elbow or one's little finger, is to tipple.

CROOKED AS A VIRGINIA FENCE. A phrase applied to any thing very crooked; and figuratively to persons of a stubborn temper who are difficult to manage.

CROPPING. This term, in the South and West, means devoting the chief attention to the cultivation of one article.

CROSS-FOX. (*Vulpes fulvus*.) A fox whose color is between the common reddish-yellow and the silver-gray, having on its back a black cross. These animals are rare, and their skins command a high price.

TO CROSS ONE'S TRACK. To oppose one's plans; synonymous with the nautical phrase, "to run athwart one's hawse."

CROSS TIMBERS. A belt of forest or woodland, from five to thirty miles in width, which extends from the Arkansas River in a southwesterly direction to the Brazos, a distance of four hundred miles. The wood is chiefly post-oak and black-jack. The forest is passable for waggons, and is a marked feature in the region where it is found, being the boundary between the cultivable and the desert portions.

The whole of the *cross timber* abounds in mast. There is a pine oak which produces acorns pleasant to the taste. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

CROTCHICAL. Crotchety. A common colloquial word in New England.

You never see such a *crotchical* old critter as he is. He flies right off the handle for nothin'. — *Sam Slick in England*.

CROWD. Any number of persons together is called, in Western parlance, a *crowd*; so that the word is often equivalent to "company."

The conveniences of the toilette were wanting as in all far Western places. A couple of tin basins, filled with muddy water from the Missouri, stood on a board, while a square foot of mirror, with a brush and comb attached by means of a string, hung upon the wall for the use of the *crowd*. — *Description of a Hotel in Kansas*.

Here, boys, drink. Liquors, captain, for the *crowd*. Step up this way, old hoss, and liquor. — *Gladstone, Englishman in Kansas*, p. 43.

In a discussion pending the election of chaplain in the House of Representatives, Washington, Mr. Elliott, of Kentucky, nominated the Rev. John Morris:

"He is," said Mr. E, "a regular member of the Hardshell Baptist Church, a very pious man, not of very eminent ability, but just the man to pray for such a *crowd* as this."

The New York Tribune, in speaking of Walker's party of fillibusters from Costa Rica, says:

Commodore Erskine has signified his intention not to carry any more of this *crowd* to Aspinwall, out of deference to the New Granadian authorities. — June 1, 1857.

I recognized a man as one of my fellow-passengers from New York to Chagres. I was glad to see him, as he was one of the most favorable specimens of that *crowd*. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 195.

**CRUEL.** One of the numerous substitutes for very, exceedingly. A man who had been seriously ill with cramp, or something of the kind, sent for the doctor, who arrived after the painful paroxysm had ceased, and when weakness had succeeded to pain.

"How are you, my friend?" said the Doctor. "Oh, Doctor, I'm powerful weak, but *cruel* easy."

**CRULLER.** (Dutch *kruller*, a curler.) A cake, made of a strip of sweetened dough, boiled in lard, the two ends of which are twisted or *curled* together. Other shapes are also employed. The New Yorkers have inherited the name and the thing from the Dutch.

**TO CRY.** To publish the banns of marriage in church. New England.

I should not be surprised if they were *cried* next Sabbath. — *Margaret*.

**CUCUMBER TREE.** (*Magnolia acuminata*.) A tree, so called from a slight resemblance of its young fruit to a cucumber. As it grows, the resemblance is lost, and the fruit becomes pinkish red.

**CUFFY.** A very common term for a negro.

**CUNNER, or CONNER.** See *Burgall*.

Two fishermen had been despatched at daybreak to procure a supply of cod for a chowder and *cunners* for a fry, and we were expecting a rare supper. — *Lee, Merrimack*, p. 133.

**CUNNUCK, or K'NUCK.** A name applied to Canadians by the people in the Northern States.

Missus didn't affection Yankees much; and *Cunnucks* she hated like poison, 'cause they enticed off negroes. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 180.

**CURB-STONE BROKERS.** Stock-operators, whose place of business is on the edge of the pavement in the vicinity of the Merchants' Exchange, and whose account-books are said to be kept in their hats. "This is a very large class of speculators, and is composed of the oldest and most experienced operators in the street [Wall street, New York]. Many of them have been members of the Stock-Exchange; but from having failed to fulfil their contracts, during some of the numerous ups and downs of the market, have been compelled to vacate their seats, and lost their membership. The *curb-stone brokers* have leased a large room directly under that occupied by the regular board; and during the session of the board a communication is kept up between the rooms, so that any transaction is known below as soon as made. Upon information derived in this way, the *curb-stone brokers* operate among themselves, and frequently with, and for the account of, the outsiders. This

class of speculators are particularly fond of operating in 'puts' and 'calls,' and in fact resort to all the different methods of doing a large business on a small capital." — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.* Vol. 37.

CURLEYCUES. See *Carlicues*.

CURIOUS. "This word is often heard in New England among the common farmers, in the sense of *excellent*, or *peculiarly excellent*; as in these expressions: 'These are *curious* apples;' 'this is *curious* cider,' etc. This use of the word is hardly known in our seaport towns." — *Pickering*.

CUPALO, for *cupola*, is a common error of pronunciation. It is also a very old one, as appears from the following passage:

Whose roof of copper shineth so,  
It excells Saint Peter's *cupello*. — *Political Ballads*, 1660.

CUSS. A vulgar pronunciation of the word *curse*.

CUSTARD APPLE. See *Sweet Sap*.

CUSTOMABLE. Subject to the payment of duties called *customs*. (*Law of Massachusetts*.) — *Webster*.

The word *dutiabie* is much used among merchants in New York, but I never heard the word *customable*.

TO CUT DIDOES. Synonymous with *to cut capers*, i. e. to be frolicsome.

Who ever heerd them Italian singers recitin' their jabber, showin' their teeth, and cuttin' *didoes* at a private concert? — *S. Slick in England*.

Watchman! take that 'ere feller to the watch-house; he comes here a *cutting up his didoes* every night. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

On, on he splurged, until not two ounces of vital air filled his breathing apparatus; over the fence of his relative's grounds Nick flew, and up the lane he travelled, hustled into the house, foamed, fumed, and *cut up* such wondrous strange *didoes*, that his wife and friends believed he had gone stark mad. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

TO CUT DIRT. To run; to go fast. Synonymous with "to cut one's stick." A vulgar expression, probably derived from the quick motion of a horse or carriage over a country road, which makes the dirt fly.

Well, the way the cow *cut dirt* was cautionary; she cleared stumps, ditches, wind-falls, and every thing. — *Sam Slick in England*.

Now *cut dirt*! screamed I; and, Jehu General Jackson! if he did n't make a straight shirt-tail for the door, may I never make another pass. — *Field, Western Tales*.

TO CUT A SWATHE. The same as *to cut a dash*.

The expression is generally applied to a person walking who is gaily dressed, and has a pompous air or swagger in his or her gait, in allusion to the sweeping motion of a scythe.

The Miss A——s *cut a tall swathe*, I tell you, for they say they are descended from a governor of Nova Scotia, and that their relations in England are some pun-finks too. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

Awake! arouse ye, Sinners! Know that you are but a notch or two lower than the angels; that you are not only put here to make money, kiss the women, and *cut a swathe*, but to fill a higher and more important destiny. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**TO CUT A SPLURGE.** The same as the foregoing, to make a show or display in dress.

Since Miss C—— has got a hyst in the world, she tries to *cut a splurge*, and make folks think she's a lady. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**CUTE.** (An abbreviation of *acute*.) Acute, sharp, keen. It is provincial in various parts of England. In New England it is a common colloquialism, though never used by educated people.

Now, says I, I'm goin' to show you about as *cute* a thing as you've seen in many a day. — *May. Downing's Letters*, p. 214.

Mr. Marcy was a right *cute*, cunning sort of a man; but in that correspondence General Taylor showed himself able to defend himself against the fie in the rear. — *Mr. Gentry's Remarks at the Taylor Meeting in N. Y.*

Miss Allin, in her "Home Ballads," in describing the Yankee, says:

No matter where his home may be —  
What flag may be unfurl'd!  
Ho 'll manage, by some *cute* device,  
To whittle through the world.

**CUTENESS.** Acuteness, keenness.

He had a pair of bright, twinkling eyes, that gave an air of extreme *cuteness* to his physiognomy. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Aug. 1845.

**CUT-GRASS.** (*Leersia oryzoides*.) The common name of a species of grass, with leaves exceedingly rough backward, so as to cut the hands if drawn across them. — *Bigelow's Flora*.

**TO CUT IT TOO FAT.** To overdo a thing, synonymous with "going it too strong."

It's bad enough to be uncomfortable in your own house without knowing why; but to have a philosopher of the Sennaar school show you why you are so, is *cutting* it rather *too fat*. — *Potiphar Papers*, p. 131.

**CUT-OFF.** Passages cut by the great Western rivers, particularly the Mississippi, affording new channels, and thus forming islands. These *cut-offs* are constantly made.

When the Mississippi, in making its *cut-offs*, is ploughing its way through the virgin soil, there float upon the top of this destroying tide, thousands of trees, that covered the land and lined its curving banks. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 172.

The settlement was one of the prettiest places on the Mississippi — a perfect location; it had some defects, until the river made the *cut-off* at Shirt Tail Bend, which remedied the evil. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

**TO CUT ROUND.** To fly about, to make a display.

The widow made herself perfectly ridiculous. She was dressed off like a young gal, and *cut round*, and laughed, and tried to be wonderful interesting. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 91.

Instead of sticking to me as she used to do, she got to *cuttin' round* with all the young fellows, just as if she cared nothin' about me no more. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**TO CUT STICK, OR TO CUT ONE'S STICK.** To be off; to leave immediately, and go with all speed. A vulgar expression, and often heard. It is also provincial in England.

Dinner is over. It's time for the ladies to *cut stick*. — *Sam Slick in England*.

If ever you see her and she begins that way, up hat and *cut stick* double quick. — *Ibid*.

**TO CUT UNDER.** To undersell in price. New York.

**TO CUT UP SHINES.** To cut capers, play tricks.

A wild bull of the prairies was *cutting up shines* at no great distance, tearing up the sod with hoofs and horns. — *Knickerbocker Mag*.

"What have these men been doing?" asked the Recorder.

"Oh, they were *cutting up* all kinds of *shines*; knocking over the ashes barrels, shying stones at lamps, kicking at doors, and disturbing the peace of the whole city." — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 61.

**CUTTER.** A light one-horse sleigh.

Sleighs are swarming up and down the street, of all sorts and sizes, from the huge omnibus with its thirty passengers to the light, gaily painted *cutters*, with their solitary fur-capped tenants, etc. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 4.

And then, we'll go sleighing, in warm raiment clad,

With fine horses neighing as if they were glad.

The shining bells jingle, the swift *cutter* flies:

And if our ears tangle, no matter; who cares? — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**CUTTOES.** (French *couteau*, a knife.) A large knife, used in olden times in New England.

There were no knives and forks, and the family helped themselves on wooden plates, with *cuttoes*. — *Margaret*, p. 10.

**CYPRESS-BRAKE.** A basin-shaped depression of land near the margin of shallow, sluggish bayous, into which the superabundant waters find their way. In these places are vast accumulations of fallen cypress-trees, which have been accumulating for ages. These are called *cypress-brakes*. — *Dickeson on the Cypress Timber of Louisiana*.

## D.

**DADDOCK.** The heart or body of a tree thoroughly rotten. — *Ash*.

This old word is not noticed by Johnson, Todd, or Webster. It is introduced by Mr. Worcester in his new dictionary.

The great red *daddocks* lay in the green pastures, where they had lain year after year, crumbling away, and sending forth innumerable forms of vegetable life. — *Margaret*, p. 215.

**DAMAGED.** Intoxicated.

**DAMSON PLUMS**, of the West Indies. See *Star-apple*.

**DANDER.** 1. Scurf at the roots of the hair; dandruff.

2. *To get one's dander up*, or *to have one's dander raised*, is to get into a passion. Here, it would seem, the dandruff is ludicrously put for the hair itself, which is represented as being raised on end, like the fur of some animals when enraged. This as well as the preceding use of the word is found in English dialects.

The Department of State did not keep back the letters of Mr. Rives, in which he boasts that he had outwitted the French. Well, this sort of *put up the dander* of the French. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 198.

The fire and fury that blazed in her eye gave ocular evidence of her *dander being up*. — *Pickings from the New Orleans Picayune*, p. 163.

As we looked at the immense strength of the Northumberland's mast, we could not help thinking that Neptune must have his *dander* considerably *raised* before he could carry it away. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

I felt my *dander risin'* when the impertinent cuss went and tuck a seat along-side of Miss Mary, and she begun to smile and talk with him as *pleasin'* as could be. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 77.

**DANGEROUS.** Endangered, being in danger. — *Forby*. This sense is local in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

**DANDYFIED.** Dandyish; like a dandy.

**DARKY.** A common term for a negro.

I wish de legislatur would set dis *darkie* free,  
Oh! what a happy place den de *darkie* land would be.  
We 'd have a *darkie* parliament,  
An' *darkie* codes of law,  
An' *darkie* judges on de bench,  
*Darkie* barristers and aw. — *Ethiopian Melodies*.

**DARK MOON.** The interval between the old and the new moon. *Western*.

I always alter my colts and plant my 'taters during the *dark moon*. — *Letter from a Western Farmer*.



**DARN.** A substitution for *damn*, generally considered a Yankeeism. It is used, however, in England. In the South the form *dīng* is used, which comes near to the English *dang*.

If e'er their jars they've made yu feel,

This gude advise you'll call;

For sich warmin's gripe—oi I'll be *darned*

'T woud soon make ye sing small. — *Essex Dialect, Noakes and Styles*.

Now let me see, that is n't all; I used 'fore leaving Jaalam,

To count things on my finger-ends, but something seems to ail 'em.

Where's my left hand? O, *darn it*, yes, I recollect what's come on 't:

I haint no left arm but my right, and that's got jest a thumb on 't

*Poetical Epistle from a Volunteer.*

**DARNATION.** A euphemism for *damnation*.

"Buttermilk, by Jingo," exclaimed the disappointed pedagogue. Saint Jingo was the only saint, and a *darnation*, or *darn you*, were the only oaths his puritan education ever allowed him to use. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 68.

**DARSENT**, for *dares not*. It is vulgarly used in all persons and numbers.

**TO DEACON A CALF** is to knock it in the head as soon as it is born. — *Connecticut*.

**TO DEACON OFF.** To give the cue to; derived from a custom, once universal but now extinct, in the New England Congregational churches. An important part of the office of deacon was to read aloud the hymns given out by the minister, one line at a time, the congregation singing each line as soon as read. — *Lowell*. In some of the interior parts of New England the custom of *deaconing off* hymns is still continued. It probably arose in the early colonial days from a scarcity of psalm books.

When all was ready [to commence the religious exercises], a prayer was made and the chorister *deaconed* the first two lines. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 77.

To funk right out o' p'lit'cal strife aint thought to be the thing,

Without you *deacon off* the tune you want your folks should sing.

*The Bigelow Papers.*

**TO DEADEN.** 1. In newly settled parts of the West, where it is designed to make a "clearing," some of the trees are cut down; the others are girdled, or *deadened*, as they say, i. e. deprived of force or sensation. If the majority of trees are thus girdled, the field is called a *deadening*, — otherwise it is a clearing. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. 240.

2. A political candidate at the West *deadens* his competitor's votes in a district by doing away with false impressions, misstatements, etc., originating with the other party.

**DEADENING.** A piece of land the trees on which have been deadened by girdling.

**DEAD BROKE.** Utterly exhausted of cash, penniless.

Damphool squawed up his board bill and paid his washer-woman, which left him *dead broke*. — *Doesticks*, p. 141.

To be *dead broke* was really, as far as a man's comfort was concerned, a matter of less importance in the mines than in almost any other place. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 255.

**DEAD HEADS.** Persons who drink at a bar, ride in an omnibus or railroad car, travel in steamboats, or visit the theatre, without charge, are called *dead heads*. These consist of the engineers, conductors, and laborers on railroads; the keepers of hotels; the editors of newspapers, etc.

"The principal avenue of our city," writes a learned friend in Detroit, "has a toll-gate just by the Elmwood Cemetery road. As the cemetery had been laid out some time previous to the construction of the plank-road, it was made one of the conditions of the company's charter that all funeral processions should go back and forth free. One day, as Dr Price, a celebrated physician, stopped to pay his toll, he remarked to the gate-keeper :

" 'Considering the benevolent character of our profession, I think you ought to let us pass free of charge.'

" 'No, no, doctor,' the keeper readily replied, 'we could n't afford that. You send too many *dead heads* through here as it is.'

"The doctor paid his toll, and never asked any favors after that." — *Wash. Even. Star*, Oct. 1857.

**DEADHEADISM.** The practice of travelling with free tickets.

As I had never experienced the blessed privilege of *deadheadism*, I could not naturally resist the opportunity of enjoying so new a sensation; and I beg to assure you that it is by no means so unpleasant as you might imagine. It was a pleasure similar to that which Lucretius describes as enjoyed by standers on the shore when they see ships tossed about on the sea, to behold wretches crowding to the ticket-offices and disbursing their money, when you have nothing to do but to take your seat and be carried through the air without money and without price. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1857.

**DEAD HORSE.** Work for which one has been paid before it is performed.

When a printer, on Saturday night, includes in his bill work not yet finished, he is said, on the following week, to "work off a *dead horse*." Also used in England.

**DEAD RABBITS.** A name recently assumed by the Irish faction in the city of New York.

If the *Dead Rabbit* think he slays,  
Or the Plug Ugly think he's slain,  
They do but pave the subtle ways  
I've trod, and mean to tread again.

*Parody on Emerson's Brahma, N. Y. Even'g Post.*

**DEAF ADDER.** See *Blauser*.

**DEAF NUT.** A nut the kernel of which is decayed. Pennsylvania. Provincial in England.

DEARBORN. A kind of light covered waggon, so named from its inventor.

DEATH. To be *death on* a thing, is to be completely master of it, a capital hand at it, like the quack doctor who could not manage the whooping-cough, but was, as he expressed it, "*death on fits*." Vulgar.

Did you ever hear tell of the man they calls Chunkey? born in Kaintuck and raised on the Mississippi; *death on* bar, and smartly in a panther fight?—*N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Women, I believe, are born with certain natural tastes. Sally was *death on* lace, and old Aunt Thankful goes the whole figure for furs — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 225.

DECEDENT. A deceased person. — *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

DECK. A pack of cards.

"Waiter," cried out an Arkansas traveller, "bring down my baggage." "What is it, sir?" "A bowie-knife, a pair of pistols, a *deck* of cards, and one shirt."

*Deck* is defined by Ash, "a pack of cards piled one upon another."

DECLENSION. We sometimes see this word used in the newspapers, in speaking of a person's declining to be a candidate for office. Ex. In consequence of the *declension* of our candidate, we shall be obliged to vote for a new one. — *Pickering*.

DECLINATION. Used in the same sense as the preceding word. It is said to have been first employed by Mr. John Pintard, when he declined a reelection as president of the American Bible Society.

TO DEED. To convey or transfer by deed. A popular use of the word in America; as, "he *deeded* all his estate to his eldest son." — *Webster*.

DEED OF TRUST. An instrument of writing under seal, conveying property from A to B, to hold or use for the benefit of C, under the agreement of A and C. Middle States.

DELAWARE. This State was so called in the year 1703, from Lord De la War, whose name was previously given to the Bay.

TO DEMORALIZE. To corrupt and undermine the morals of; to destroy or lessen the effect of moral principles on. — *Webster*. Professor Lyell, who visited Dr. Webster, says, "When the Doctor was asked how many words he had coined for his Dictionary, he replied, only one, '*to demoralize*;' and that not for his Dictionary, but in a pamphlet published in the last century." — *Travels in the U. States*, p. 53. Mr. Jodrell, in his "Philology of the English Language," gives the word a place, and cites as an example, a passage from a speech by Lord Liverpool, in the House of Lords, March 11, 1817:

They had endeavored to guard and protect the people against the attempts which were made to corrupt and *demoralize* them.

The native vigor of the soul must wholly disappear, under the steady influence and the *demoralizing* example of profligate power and prosperous crime. — *Walsh, Letters on France.*

DENGUE. See *Break-bone Fever.*

DEPARTMENT. (Fr. *département.*) The principal offices of the federal government at Washington, at the head of each of which is a Secretary, are styled *departments*. Thus we have the State Department, Interior Department, Treasury Department, etc. This expression and also the following are borrowed from the French.

DEPARTMENTAL. Pertaining to a department, or division. — *Webster.*

The game played by the revolutionists in 1789 was now played against the *departmental* guards, called together for the protection of revolutionists. — *Bunke, Pref. to Brissot's Address.*

Which it required all the exertion of the *departmental* force to suppress. — *H. M. Williams, Letters on France.*

DEPOT. (Pron. *dee'po.*) A railroad station-house.

TO DEPUTIZE. To depute; to appoint a deputy; to empower to act for another, as a sheriff. — *Webster.*

This word is not in any of the English dictionaries except one of the early editions of Bailey, where it appears in the Preface among words in modern authors, collected after the Dictionary was printed. Mr. Pickering remarks, that "the word is sometimes heard in *conversation*, but rarely occurs in *writing*, and has always been considered as a mere vulgarism."

They seldom think it necessary to *deputize* more than one person to attend to their interests at the seat of government. — *Port Folio*, January, 1811.

DESERET. A name given by the Mormons to the Territory of Utah, which they occupy.

DESK. The pulpit in a church, and figuratively, the clerical profession. "The Rev. Mr. Poundtext appears well at the *desk*." "He intends one son for the bar, and another for the *desk*." This New England word is not generally used in other parts of the country.

The pulpit, or as it is here [in Connecticut] called, the *desk*, was filled by three, if not four, clergymen; a number which, by its form and dimensions, it was able to accommodate. — *Kendall's Travels*, Vol. I. p. 4.

They are common to every species of oratory, though of rarer use in the *desk*, etc. — *Adams's Lecture on Rhetoric.*

DESPERATE, commonly pronounced *despert*, and used to denote exceedingly; as "I'm *despert* glad to see you." Bad as this use and pronuncia-

tion of the word are, they are both to be found in England. Mr. Hamilton notices the word among the provincialisms of Yorkshire; as, "Thou's *desperate* hopeful!"—*Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 353.

"Waes me! what's this that lugs sac at my heart,  
And fills my breast with such a *despert* smart?"

*Poems in Westmoreland and Cumberland Dialect*, p. 117.

**DESSERT.** This term, which properly signifies the fruits and nuts brought on the table after the substantial parts of a dinner, is often improperly applied in the United States to the puddings and pies.

**TO DESULPHURIZE.** To take the sulphur out of vulcanized Caoutchouc.

**DEVIL'S DARNING-NEEDLE.** A common name for the Dragon-fly. In England, according to Wright, it is called the Devil's Needle.

Now and then a long-legged spider would run across our track with incredible rapidity, or a *devil's darning-needle* would pertinaciously hover above our heads, and cause me, impressed with an old nursery caution, to duck and dodge, and hold my hands over my ears, until the winged spectre would fly away across the garden.—*Putnam's Monthly*, June, 1854.

**DEVIL-FISH.** (Genus, *Sophiuis*. Cuvier.) The common name of the *American Angler*, so called from its hideous form. It is also known by the names of Sea-devil, Fishing-frog, Bellows-fish, Goose-fish, Monk-fish, and others.—*Storer's Fishes of Mass.*

**DEVILTRY.** Mischief; devilry. Provincial in England.

The office-holding gentry at Washington will meet with their match in an indignant people, when they come to find out their *deviltry*.—*Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 106.

Peter Funk is ready to be employed in all manner of deceit and *deviltry*. He cares not who his employers are.—*Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 51.

**DEWBERRY.** (*Rubus Canadensis*.) A low-trailing species of Blackberry.

**DICKER.** Barter; also articles received in barter. Western.

Grant that the North's insulted, scorned, betrayed,  
O'erreached in bargains with her neighbor made,  
When selfish thrift and party held the scales  
For peddling *dicker*, not for honest sales,  
Whom shall we strike?—*Whittier. The Panorama.*

**TO DICKER.** To barter. Used in New York and New England.

The white men who penetrated to the semi-wilds [of the West] were always ready to *dicker* and to swap, and to trade rifles and watches, and whatever else they might happen to possess.—*Cooper. The Oak Openings.*

**DIFFERENT FROM.** We say one thing is "different *from*" another. In England the expression is "different *to*," and so the old English writers quoted in Richardson's Dictionary. Comp. *Averse*.

**DIFFICULTED.** Perplexed. Mr. Sherwood has this among the words peculiar to Georgia, and there are examples of its use to be found in some of our well-known authors. It is in common use at the bar: "The gentleman, I think, will be *difficulted* to find a parallel case."

There is no break in the chain of vital operation; and consequently we are not *difficulted* at all on the score of the relation which the new plant bears to the old — *Bush on the Resurrection*, p. 57.

Dr. Jamieson has the verb *to difficult* in his Scottish Dictionary.

**DIG.** A diligent student, one who learns his lessons by hard and long continued exertion. — *Hall's College Words*.

There goes the *dig*, just look!

How like a parson he eyes his book!

*N. Y. Literary World*, Oct. 11, 1851.

By this 't is that we get ahead of the *dig*,

'T is not we that prevail, but the wine that we swig.

*Amherst Indicator*, Vol. II. p. 252.

**DIGGING.** 1. A word first used at the Western lead mines, to denote a place where the ore was dug. Instead of saying this or that mine, the phrase in vogue is *these diggings*, or *those diggings*.

Mr. Charles F. Hoffman visited the Galena lead-mines, and while there was shown about to the various estates, where the people were digging for ore. The person who accompanied him said:

Mr. ———, from your State, has lately struck a lead, and a few years will make him independent. We are now, you observe, among his *diggings* — *Winter in the West*, Let. 25.

The principal *diggings* near Haugtown were surface *diggings*, but, with the exception of river *diggings*, every kind of mining was seen in full force. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 120.

The phrase *these diggings* is now provincial in the Western States, and is occasionally heard in the Eastern, to denote a neighborhood, or particular section of country.

Boys, fellows, and candidates, I am the first white man ever seed in these *diggings*. I killed the first bar [bear] ever a white skinned in the county, and am the first manufacturer of whiskey, and a powerful mixture it is too. — *Robb, Squatter Life*

I ain't a vain man, and never was. I hante a morsel of it in my composition. I don't think any of us Yankees is vain people; it's a thing don't grow in our *diggings*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 24.

2. The act of studying hard; diligent application. — *Hall*.

I've had an easy time in college, and enjoyed the "otium cum dignitate," — the learned leisure of a scholar's life, — always despised *digging*, you know. — *Harvard Reg.* p. 194.

3. Dear, or costly; as, "a mighty *digging* price." A Southern word. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**TO DILL.** (Probably the same as *to dull*.) To soothe. The word is used in the north of England.

I know what is in this medicine. It'll *dill* fevers, dry up sores, stop rheumatis, drive out rattlesnake's bite, kill worms, etc.—*Margaret*, p. 140.

**DIME.** (Fr. *dième* or *dîme*, tenth.) A silver coin of the United States, in value the tenth of a dollar, or ten cents.

This term, peculiar to our decimal currency, is now in common use at the South and West; but in the Eastern and Northern States, whence the Spanish real and half-real, which long formed a large portion of the circulation, have only recently been banished, it is usually called a *ten-cent piece*, and the half-dime a *five-cent piece*.

Small articles are sold in the New Orleans markets by the picayune or *dime's* worth. If you ask for a pound of figs, you will not be understood; but for a *dime's* worth, and they are in your hands in a trice.—*Sketches of New Orleans*. N. Y. *Tribune*.

The currency [in New Orleans] is more truly national than that of any other part of the United States. Every thing sells by *dimes* and half-*dimes*, "bits" and "picayunes" being the same value; and as for copper money, I have not seen the first red cent.—*Bayard Taylor, Letter from N. O.*, July, 1849.

**DIMES.** Common in the West and South for money. "She's got the *dimes*," i. e. she is an heiress.

**DING.** Very, excessively. A Southern word. See *Darn*.

It was *ding* hot; so I sot down to rest a bit under the trees.—*Chron. of Pineville*.

**DINGED.** Very, excessively. An expletive peculiar to the South, the equivalent of the Northern *darned*.

You know it's a *dinged* long ride from Pineville, and it took me most two days to get there.—*Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**DINGLING.** Tottering, insecure; prob. i. q. *dangling*.

We have been telling our readers that federalism is just now in a very *dingling* way, while the Express insists that the democracy is in the same condition.—*N. Y. True Sun*, Aug. 26, 1848.

**DINING-ROOM SERVANT.** A male house-servant or waiter.

**TO DIP SNUFF.** A mode of taking tobacco, practised by women in some parts of the United States, and particularly at the South, may be thus described: A little pine stick or bit of rattan about three inches long, split up like a brush at one end, is first wetted and then dipped into snuff; with this the teeth are rubbed, sometimes by the hour together. Some tie the snuff in a little bag, and chew it. These filthy practices, which originated in the use of snuff for cleansing the teeth, seem to be rapidly going out of use, at least at the North.

**DIPPER.** A small aquatic bird, common throughout the United States; also called the Water-witch and Hell-diver. (*Horned grebe*. Nuttall, Ornith.) — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**DIPSY.** A term applied, in some parts of Pennsylvania, to the float of a fishing-line.

**DIRT.** This word is used more commonly and frequently with us than in England, to denote earth, clay, etc. An English traveller in the United States observes, that he heard a man speak of his having wheeled *dirt* to repair a road. A "*dirt* road," as distinguished from a turnpike-road, is often heard in the West. The "*dirt*-cart," or cart which removes street sweepings, would, in London, be called a "dust-cart."

In California, "*dirt*" is the universal word to signify the substance dug; earth, clay, gravel, or loose slate. The miners talk of rich *dut* and poor *dirt*, and of stripping off so many feet of "top *dirt*" before getting to "pay *dirt*," the latter meaning *dirt* with so much gold in it that it will pay to dig it up and wash it. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 120.

**TO DISFELLOWSHIP.** To dispossess of church-membership. A monstrous word. See *To Fellowship*.

No person that has been *disfellowshipped*, or excommunicated from the church, will be allowed to go forth in the dance that is conducted by the sanction and authority of the church — *Mormon Regulation*, published in the *Frontier* (Iowa) *Guardian*, Nov. 28, 1849.

**DISGUISED IN LIQUOR**, or simply *disguised*. Intoxicated.

**TO DISREMEMBER.** To forget. Used chiefly in the Southern States.

"Well, I *disremember* about that," said the Widow Bedott, "but I do remember o' hearin' you blow the Elder up for goin' to Baptist meetin'." — *Bedott Papers*, p. 129.

It's a curious story, and I'll tell you all of it I can think on. But some things perhaps I may *disremember*. — *Western Tale*, *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I'll thank you, when we meet again, not to *disremember* the old saying, but let every man skin his own skunks. — *David Crockett*.

**TO DISSIPATE.** To practise dissipation, to live idly or irregularly; to disperse. Colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

**DISTRESSED.** (Pron. *dis-tress'-ed*.) Miserable, wretched. "*Distressed* man!" was, and perhaps is, a favorite exclamation with ladies at the North.

"Why," said the peddler to the Widow Bedott, who had selected an article for her wedding dress, "a body 'd think 't was some everlastin' old maid, instead of a handsome young widder that had chosen such a *distressed* thing for a weddin' dress." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 113.

**DISTRICT COURTS.** In American law. Courts held in each of the thirty-five districts into which the United States are divided, consisting each of a



single judge, and which act both as courts of common law and as courts of admiralty.

**DIVIDE.** The name applied by Western hunters and guides to a ridge of land which divides waters running in different directions; a dividing ridge.

We commenced to ascend another *divide*; and as we approached the summit, the narrow valley leading to it was covered with timber and long grass — *Emory's New Mexico and California*, p. 105.

The eastern fork [of the Arkansas] skirts the base of the range, coming from the ridge, called the *divide*, which separates the waters of the Platte from the Arkansas. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 241.

Continued our route towards an opening in the elevated ridge which stretched across our path in a direction from north to south, called the *divide*. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*, Vol. I. p. 73.

**DIVORT.** This word expresses fully what no word at present does. The word "divide" is not etymologically applicable, as it does not convey the idea of altitude as the cause of separation; while the word *divort* implies elevation, the cause of the *divortia aquarum* — whence its derivation also. — *Dr. Antisell, Geolog. Rept. Pacific R. R. Survey*, Vol. VII.

On crossing the *divort* between the small stream, a tributary of the Salinas, and the waters of the San Antonio, this bed was found to occupy a large surface and to be the uppermost rock — *Dr. Antisell, ibid.* p. 40.

**DO DON'T,** for *do not* or *don't*, is a common expression in Georgia and South Carolina, and not by any means confined to the uneducated classes.

**DO TELL!** A vulgar exclamation common in New England, and synonymous with really! indeed! is it possible!

A bright-eyed little demoiselle from Virginia came running into the dairy of a country-house in New Hampshire, at which her mother was spending the summer, with a long story about a most beautiful butterfly she had been chasing; and the dairy-maid, after hearing the story through, exclaimed, *Do tell!* The child immediately repeated the story, and the good-natured maid, after hearing it through a second time, exclaimed again, in a tone of still greater wonder, *Do tell!* A third time the story was told, and the third time came the exclamation of wonder, *Do tell!* The child's spirits were dashed, and she went to her mother with a sad tale about Ruth's teasing her; while poor Ruth said that "those *daown* country gals were so strange; keep telling me the same thing over and over, — I never see any thing like it!" — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

**DOBBIE.** A float to a fishing-line. So called in New York.

The most singular luck attended Ten Broeck, who, falling overboard, was miraculously preserved from sinking by his nether garments. Thus buoyed up, he floated on the waves like an angler's *dobber*, etc. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**DOCIOUS.** A corruption of *docile*, as "a *docious* young man," "a *docious* horse."

I was so mad that I swore just nigh on to half an hour, right straight on cend. I can hardly keep my tongue *docious* now to talk about it. — *Western Life*. N. Y. *Spirit of the Times*.

**DOCITY.** (Pron. *dossity*.) A low word, used in some parts of the United States to signify *quick comprehension*. It is only used in conversation, and generally with a negative, thus: "He has no *docity*." It is a provincial word in England. — *Pickering*.

**DOCK.** We often apply the term to the "slip" or space between two piers for the reception of vessels. It is believed to be restricted in England to an enclosed basin. "Balance *dock*," "sectional *dock*," "screw *dock*," are none of them really docks, but contrivances by which vessels are raised from the water for repair.

**DOCKMACKIE.** (*Viburnum acerifolium*.) Probably named by the Dutch, among whom the plant was used for external applications in tumors, etc., a practice learned by them from the Indians.

**DOCK WALLOPER.** A loafer that hangs about the wharves. New York.

**DOCTOR.** The cook on board a ship; so called by seamen.

**DOD FETCHED.** A euphemistic form of swearing.

Liddy, don't be so pesky starch, I'll be *dod fetched* if I meant any harm. — *Southern Sketches*.

**DOD ROT IT.** } Confound it. A euphemistic oath.  
**DOD DRAT IT.** }

He began cussin' like all wrath, and says he, *dod rot* that old Mike Shouter. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

Here's the old man agoin' to give you another wallop in'. I'll cut and run, and *dot drot* me if I don't. — *Sam Slick*. *Human Nature*, p. 60.

**DODGER.** A hard baked cake or biscuit. See *Corn-dodger* and *Beef-dodger*.

**TO DOG.** To hunt with dogs.

What is to be the fate of Soulouque and his subjects? How long will it take to pick a quarrel with them, and when will regiments from the South, trained at home to the hunting and *dogging* of fugitive slaves, achieve what Bonaparte could not, the reëslavement of Hayti, and wipe out in blood "the horrors of St. Domingo," the standing bugbear of emancipation? — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1854.

**DOG GAUNED.** An anagrammatic form of swearing. Southern.

If there's a *dog-goned* abolitionist aboard this boat, I should like to see him. I'm the man to put a chunk o' lead into his woolly head right off. — *Gladstone*. *Englishman in Kansas*, p. 46.

No, says I, I won't do no sich *dog on* thing; for when I likes a chap, I likes him. But if you want to fight, I'm your man. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 33.

**DOGGED.** A euphemistic oath; as, "I'll be *dogged* if I do it."

**DOGGERY.** A low drinking-house. West and South. The "Cleveland Plaindealer," in speaking of the riotous proceedings connected with the Erie Railroad troubles, says :

The mob crowded the sheriff on, and drove him into the Key Stone Saloon, a small *doggery*, where they kept him for half an hour.

**DOINGS.** (Pron. *doins*.) Prepared food; victuals. A Western vulgarism. See *Chicken Fixings*.

If thar was n't cold *doins* about that time (in the mountains), this child would n't say so. Thar was no buffalo and no meat, and we had been livin' on our moccasins for weeks; and poor *doins* that feedin' is. — *Ruxton's Life in the Far West*, p. 17.

**DOLLAR MARK (\$).** The origin of this sign to represent the *dollar* has been the cause of much discussion. One writer says it comes from the letters U. S. (United States), which, after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, were prefixed to the federal currency, and which afterwards, in the hurry of writing, were run into one another; the U being made first and the S over it. Another, that it is derived from the contraction of the Spanish word *pesos*, dollars, or *pesos fuertes*, hard dollars. A third that it is a contraction for the Spanish *fuertes*, hard, to distinguish silver or hard dollars from paper-money. The more probable explanation is, that it is a modification of the figures §, formerly used to denote a piece of eight reals, or, as a dollar was then called, a *piece of eight*.

As to my boat, it was a very good one; and that he saw, and told me he would buy it of me for the ship's use; and asked me what I would have for it? I told him that I could not offer to make any price of the boat, but left it entirely to him; upon which he told me he would give me a note of hand to pay me *eighty pieces of eight* for it in Brazil. He offered me also sixty *pieces of eight* more for my boy Xury, which I was loath to take; not that I was not willing to let the captain have him, but I was loath to sell the poor boy's liberty, who had assisted me so faithfully in procuring my own. — *Robinson Crusoe*, sec. 4.

A variety of other theories will be found in the Historical Magazine, Vol. I. pp. 122, 186, 245.

**DOLESS.** Inefficient. "He's a *doless* sort of a fellow."

**DOLITTLE.** A drone; an idle person.

**DOMESTICS.** (Used only in the plural.) Domestic goods, i. e. cotton goods of American manufacture.

**DONATE.** To give as a donation; to contribute. This word is not yet in the dictionaries, but has only reached the newspapers and reviews.

There have been received from the Foreign Bible Society \$7,000, not including \$1,000 recently *donated*. — *Baptist Missionary Herald*, Rep. 1846.

The display of articles exhibited [at the Fair in Albany] was very tasteful and

attractive; and the friends of the cause in Massachusetts and other places *donated* liberally. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 6, 1846.

Mr. Peabody *donates* to the city of Baltimore an institute for the moral and intellectual culture of the inhabitants. — *N. Y. Herald*, Feb. 19, 1857.

**DONATION.** That which is given or bestowed; a gift, a grant. *Donation* is usually applied to things of more value than *presents*. — *Webster*.

Webster says that *donation* is usually applied to things of more value than *presents*; but while such may be true in the States, I have known it applied here to a basket of musty cakes. I suppose that *donation* has a certain meaning in law. Its most ordinary English application is to a single gift in money, in contradistinction to the periodical payments of a fixed sum or subscription. When applied to a *present*, public or private, I apprehend such an application of the term has its origin in mere pomposity. The language stands in no need of such an expression so long as we have our old Saxon *gift*. — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

**DONATION PARTY.** A party consisting of the friends and parishioners of a country clergyman assembled together, each individual bringing some article of food or clothing as a present to him. Where the salary of a clergyman is small, the contributions at a *donation party* are very acceptable. It is also called a *giving party*.

In the "Bedott Papers" is an amusing description of a *donation party* given to a country minister who had a salary of but \$400 a year. On this occasion the visitors were very numerous, and the articles presented so very few that the minister's family were compelled to contribute the larger portion of the refreshments. The poor clergyman sent in his resignation immediately after, and, on being asked by a deacon for the reason of his sudden withdrawal, answered:

I've been your pastor two years, and you've had the kindness to give me two *donation parties*. I've stood it so far, but I can't stand it any longer; brethren, I feel convinced that one more *donation party* would completely break me down. — p. 271.

**DONE**, instead of *did*; as, "I *done* it," "They *done* the business." A common vulgarism in the State of New York, also heard in the province of Leinster, Ireland. An officer wrote to his general in the late war, that his troops "*done* their duty;" and in certain letters purporting to be from the "upper ten" in praise of Dr. Townsend's medicines, we read that "they *done* the writers great good."

**DONE** with a past participle, as "He's *done* come, *done* gone, *done* said, *done* did it," etc., is a negro vulgarism frequently heard at the South.

Oh! she waked me in the mornin', and it's broad day;  
I look'd for my canoe, and it's *done* gone away.

*Porter's Tales of the Southwest*, p. 133.

I'm mighty easy on the trigger, and the next mornin' I was *done* gone. I kissed the old woman, spanked the children, threaten'd the niggers, promised the overseer

a new covering and demijohn of red eye if all went straight, got all my little fixins together, and off I set. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*

"Why, Tomtit, what upon earth is this for?" said Nina.

"Laws, missis, there's been a gentleman waiting for you these two hours. And missis, she's *done* got on her best cap, and gone down in the parlor for him." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 139.

"How d'y Miss Kate," returned Bob grinning; "Uncle Pete is *done* dead and buried."

"Is that a fact?" asked Mr. Mitchell, looking out.

"Fac truf, Mas'r! an what's more, Aunt Milly is like to die too; she's gruv herself nearly to death 'bout it." — *Emma Bartlett*.

**DONOCK.** A stone; a term almost peculiar to Arkansas, though used more or less throughout the South.

Then bring me a couple of *donocks*,  
Place them at my head and my toe,  
And do not forget to write on it  
The name of old Rosin-the-bow. — *Song, Rosin the Bow*.

**DON'T.** The proper colloquial contraction for *do not*; and which should therefore be used only in the first person singular and in the plural. Yet we very often hear it instead of *doesn't* for *does not*; as, "He *don't* tell the truth."

Here is the source of all the trouble and dissatisfaction in what may be called the country life of gentlemen amateurs or citizens in this country, — it *don't* pay. — *Downing's Rural Essays*.

**I DON'T KNOW AS I SHAN'T,** for I don't know but I shall. This uncouth expression, Mr. Hurd says, is very common in the eastern towns of Massachusetts, near Cape Cod. — *Grammatical Corrector*.

**TO DOOM.** To tax at discretion. A New England term.

When a person neglects to make a return of his taxable property to the assessors of a town, those officers *doom* him; that is, *judge* upon, and fix his tax according to their discretion. — *Pickering*.

The estates of all merchants, shopkeepers, and factors, shall be assessed by the rule of common estimation, according to the will and *doom* of the assessors. — *Massachusetts Colony Laws*, p. 14, ed. 1660.

**DOOMAGE.** A penalty, or fine, for neglect. *Laws of New Hampshire*. — *Webster*.

**DOREE.** A fish commonly called *John Dory* with us as in England. This last name is a corruption of the French *jaune dorée*, golden yellow, which is the color of the fish.

**DORY.** A kind of canoe.

**DOTED.** Changed, or half rotten; as "*doted* wood." West and South.

**DOUBLE.** A flower the number of whose petals is increased by cultivation is said to be *double*; when the increase is very great, it is termed *very double*!

**DOUGH-FACES.** A contemptuous nickname, applied to the Northern favorers and abettors of negro slavery. This term may be regarded as nearly or quite synonymous with the English "nose of wax." Generally it means a pliable politician,—one who is accessible to personal influences and considerations. It was first applied, however, by John Randolph of Roanoke to such Northern members of congress as manifested especial willingness to fall in with the views and demands of the South on questions involving the "peculiar institution." Speaking of the Northern Democrats, he bitterly said:

I knew that these men would give way. They were scared at their own *dough-faces*—yes, they were scared at their own *dough-faces*. We had them, and if we had wanted more, we could have had them.

The truth is, that while the Southerners need and are willing to pay for the services of the *dough-faces*, they dislike their persons and despise their discourse. —*N. Y. Tribune*, April, 1848.

Thanks to a kind Providence, and the manly straightforwardness of John C. Calhoun, the great question of extension or non-extension of human slavery under the flag of this republic is to be pressed to a decision now. Desperate, idolatrous, and blind as is his devotion to slavery, we would sooner see him President to-morrow than any *dough-face* in the Union. *Ibid.*, June 29, 1848.

This term has also been applied to Southern men who are false to the principles of slavery, as Northern *dough-faces* are to the principles of freedom.

There was a disposition in the senate to evade the question—to slip a bill for the establishment of the Oregon territory through the senate, without calling attention to the slavery question, and under the immediate pressure of the demand made for the military defence of the territory from the Indians. The whigs of the North and of the South were silent. The democratic Cass men of the North and of the South were *mum*. Two thirds of the senate were *dough-faced*. There are Southern as well as Northern *dough-faces*; men looking to the spoils care not for principles,—whether they be of the North or of the South. —*Washington Cor. N. Y. Com. Adv.*, June 4, 1848.

**DOUGH-FACISM.** Truckling to the slave power.

The slaveholders will cling to the institutions of slavery as long as new markets are being opened for their slaves. Let the people of the free States see to it that it is circumvented by every reasonable means. If they are firm, the *dough-facism* of their representatives will be cured. —*Letter of J. C. Snodgrass, of Baltimore*, 1849.

**DOUGH-HEAD.** A soft-pated fellow, a fool.

**DOUGH-NUT.** A small roundish cake, made of flour, eggs, and sugar, moistened with milk, and boiled in lard. —*Webster*. According to Halli-

well, the term *donnut* is used in Hertshire, to denote a pancake made of dough instead of batter. In speaking of the preparations for a picnic, Mr. Shillaber says :

And then he lays in lots of pickings,  
Mammoth *dough-nuts*, legs of chickens ;  
For pices down at Hampton Beach  
Are very much beyond his reach. — *Poems*.

Mr. Elliott, in describing the manners and customs of the olden time in New England, says :

At the supper table many a sweet thing was whispered behind a *dough-nut*, and many a sentiment tucked in a pie. — *New England History*, Vol. I. p. 468.

Hannah is a smart, willin' gull, and a rael worker, and a prime cook into the bargain ; but let her alone for in the *dough-nut* line and for pumpkin pies. — *McClintock's Tales*.

**DOVE.** Dived. Very common among seamen, and not confined to them. The Rev. A. C. Geikie says : In England, when a swimmer makes his first leap, head foremost, into the water, he is said to *dive*, and is spoken of as having *dived*, in accordance with the ordinary and regular construction of the verb. Not so, however, is it with the modern refinements of our Canadian English. In referring to such a fact here, it would be said, not that he *dived*, but that he *dove*. Even Longfellow makes use of this form — so harsh and unfamiliar to English ears — in the musical measures of his *Hiawatha* :

“ Straight into the river Kwasind  
Plunged as if he were an otter,  
Dove as if he were a beaver,” etc.

*Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

**DOWD.** A woman's night-cap, composed of two pieces of cloth, the seam running from the forehead to the neck. It is sometimes called a “squaw-shaped cap.” New York. The word is used in the same sense in Devonshire, England.

**DOWN UPON.** To be down upon is to seize with avidity, as a bird of prey would pounce *down upon* its victim. Alluding to the state of the poultry market, the New York Tribune says :

The boarding-house keepers are *down upon* geese.

This phrase is also used to express disapprobation, dislike, or enmity ; as, “ I'll be *down upon* you,” i. e. I'll come up with you, or pay you off for some injury or insult, etc. A common expression at the West is, “ I'll be *down upon* you like a thousand of brick.”

**DOWN CELLAR,** for down in or into the cellar, is a common New England expression. So too is “ up garret.”

**DOWN EAST.** In or into the Eastern States, i. e. New England.

We have never heard of better missionary ground than *down East*; the people intelligent, the climate healthful, the villages numerous and wealthy. — *N. Y. Christian Enquirer*, Sept. 9, 1848.

Mr. Hill, in one of his visits *down East*, was belated one evening, and was compelled to seek shelter in a farm-house. — *G. H. Hill, Tales*

**DOWN EASTER.** A New Englander.

**TO DOXOLOGIZE.** To give glory to God, as in doxology. — *Webster*.

No instance is to be found in which primitive Christians *doxologized* the spirit of God as a person. — *Christian Disciple*, Vol. II p. 295.

Mr. Pickering says he "never met with the word in any other American work, nor in any English publication; but that it may possibly be a part of the professional language of divines." Mr. P. further observes, that he found it in the early editions of the dictionaries of Ash and Bailey, from which it was afterwards discarded. Mr. Worcester has inserted the word in his new dictionary.

**DRAG OUT.** A "knock down and *drag out*" is a fight carried to extremities. The term *drag out* seems to be also used, at the South, to denote a bully, a tearer.

Set to your partner, Dolly, — Cut him out, Jim, — Sal does put her foot down good. The yellow roan's up! He's a rael stormer, ring clipper, snow belcher, and *drag out*. — *Southern Sketches*.

**DRAGGED OUT.** Fatigued, exhausted, worn out with labor.

**TO DRAW A BEAD.** To take aim with a rifle, by gradually raising the front sight, called the *bead*, to a level with the hind sight.

One look from the Colonel brought White's rifle up to his cheek; he *drew a bead* on him mighty quick, and the lawyer stopped his lumbering and moved off — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

The Missourians, with their long five foot barrel rifles, which were their constant companions, could *draw a bead* on a deer, a squirrel, or the white of an Indian's eye, with equal coolness and certainty of killing. — *Borthwick's Californian*, p. 151.

The moon rose, . . . and rifle in hand we approached the trees where the unconscious birds were roosting. Creeping along the round, I raised my rifle and endeavored to obtain a sight, but the light was too obscure to *draw a bead*. — *Ruxton's Adventures in Mexico*, p. 181.

**TO DRAW A STRAIGHT FURROW.** A metaphor taken from the ploughman. To live uprightly or decorously.

Governor B. is a sensible man;

He stays to his home and looks arter his folks;

He *draws his furrow* as straight as he can,

And into nobody's tater-patch pokes. — *The Biglow Papers*.



**DREADFUL.** Very, exceedingly. This and the words *awful*, *terrible*, *desperate*, *monstrous*, etc., are indiscriminately used by uneducated people for the purpose of giving emphasis to an expression.

There was a swod of fine folks at Saratoga, and *dreadful* nice galls. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 35.

It's a fact, Major, the public has a *dreadful* cravin' appetite for books. — *Ibid. May-Day in N. Y.*, p. 4.

The young ladies thought Mr. Harley's new storekeeper a *dreadful* nice young man, if he had n't such a horrid nose. — *Chronicles of Pineville*.

She was a *dreadful* good creature to work. — *Mrs. Clavers*.

It is used in the same way in England, in the Westmoreland and Cumberland dialects :

I send to this an, to tell thee amackily what *dreadful* fine things I saw i' th' road tuv at yon Dublin. — *Poems and Glossary*, p. 125.

**TO DRESS.** *To dress to death*, *dress to kill*, *dress to the nines*, and, in the South, *to dress up drunk*, are women's phrases, which signify to overdress, dress to excess.

When you see a gentleman tipteeing along Broadway, with a lady wiggle-wagging by his side, and both *dressed to kill*, as the vulgar would say, you may say that he looks out for himself and takes care of A. No. 1. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 208.

**DRINK.** A river. "The Big *Drink*" is a common term applied by South-Western people to the Mississippi River.

The old boat was a rouser — the biggest on the *drink*, had the best officers, and paid the best prices. — *Maj. Bunkum, in N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

He kept shoving the boat out, and the first thing I knowd, down I went, kerwash into the *drink*. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 36.

About evenin' I got my small dug-out, and fixin' my rifle in the fore eend, I jest paddled over the *drink*. — *A Night on the Missouri*.

**DRINKING.** "He's a *drinking* man," i. e. a toper.

**DRIVE.** In Texas, the annual gathering of large herds of cattle for the purpose of branding. This is provided for by law in California. See *Rodeo*, and *Judges of the Plain*.

When a regular *drive* is made, a dozen neighbors, from twenty miles or more about, assemble at a place agreed upon, each man bringing two or three extra horses. These are driven before the company, and form the nucleus of the cattle herd collected. They first drive the outer part of the circuit, within which their cattle are supposed to range, the radius of which is here about forty miles. All cattle having their marks, and all calves following their cows, are herded and driven to pens which have been prepared. They are absent from two to three weeks upon the first *drive*, usually contriving to arrive by night at a pen in which the stock are enclosed, otherwise guarding them in the open prairie. When the vicinity of a

house is reached, the cattle are divided. The calves are branded, and all turned loose again — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 369.

**DRIVER.** 1. He or that which drives; a coachman, a carman. — *Worcester*. In England, the driver of a carriage is called a "coachman."

2. A negro-driver, an overseer of slaves on a plantation.

**TO BE DRIVING AT.** "What are you *driving at*?" that is, what are you about? what object have you in view? A colloquial expression, in very common use.

We confess that we are exceedingly puzzled to know exactly what our long-cherished friend is *driving at*, in his repeated discussions of the question above involved. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

People ludicrate my situation, and say they do n't know what the deuce I'm *driving at*. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

"I have heard enough now," said the recorder, "to know what you and he would be *driving at*." — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 135.

**DROGER, or DROGHER.** Lumber droger; cotton droger, etc. A vessel built solely for burden, and for transporting cotton, lumber, and other heavy articles.

**DROP GAME.** A trick practised by the light-fingered gentry of New York and other eastern cities on their country cousins. One drops a pocket-book containing a large roll of bank-notes a short distance before an approaching stranger, which a confederate picks up just as the stranger is about to do so. He opens the roll, affects surprise at his discovery, manifests sympathy for the loser, and tells the stranger, that, being about to leave town, he will surrender it to him for \$10 or \$20, on condition that he will advertise it and endeavor to find the owner. Greenhorn eagerly snaps at the tempting bait; but on reaching his hotel finds, of course, that he is the possessor of a package of spurious money.

**DROP-LETTER.** A letter *dropped* into the post-office for a resident of the same place, and which is therefore not to be mailed.

**DRUMMER.** A person employed by city houses to solicit the custom of country merchants. See *Drumming*.

**DRUMMING**, in mercantile phrase, means the soliciting of customers. It is chiefly used in reference to country merchants, or those supposed to be such. Instead of patiently waiting for these persons to come and purchase, the merchant or his clerk goes to them and solicits their custom. In this manner the sale of goods is often expedited; and though the practice of *drumming* is held by some to be neither very modest nor very dignified, still it must be owned to add very largely, in certain cases, to the amount of goods sold. Indeed, without *drumming*, it is sus-

pected that sundry houses which make a remarkable show and noise would do very little business.

The expenses of *drumming* amount to no small sum. Besides employing extra clerks and paying the extra price for their board at the hotels, the merchant has to be very liberal with his money in paying for wine, oyster suppers, theatre tickets, and such other means of conciliating the favor of the country merchant as are usually resorted to by *drummers*. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, ch. 9.

**DUBERSOME.** Doubtful. A vulgarism common in the interior of New England. *Duberous* is used in England.

I have been studyin' Tattersall's considerable, to see whether it is a safe shop to trade in or no. But I'm *dubersome*; I do n't like the cut of the sporting folks here. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 28.

Before noon, rain came, and then the pilot muttered that he felt *dubersome* about the appearances. — *Lieut. Wise, Scampavia*, p. 18.

**DUBOUS.** A mispronunciation of *dubious*.

**DUG-OUT.** The name, in the Western States, for a canoe or boat hewn or *dug out* of a large log. They are common in all the rivers and creeks of the United States and Canada. In the latter country they are called *log canoes*.

A cypress suitable for a canoe, or *dug-out*, was selected, and in two days shaped, hollowed out, and launched. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 35.

After a fashion I got to my *dug-out*, with no weapon along but the paddle. Snags were plenty. I felt strong as a hoss too; and the *dug-out* had n't leaped more'n six lengths afore — co-souse I went! — the front eend jest lifted itself agin a sawyer and emptied me into the element. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**DULL MUSIC.** A term applied to any thing tedious.

**DUMB.** Stupid.

**DUMB CHILL, or DUMB AGUE.** An expression common in malaria regions to denote that form of intermittent fever which has no well defined "chill."

**TO DUMP.** To unload wood, coal, etc., from a cart by tilting it up. The word is used in Devonshire in the sense of to knock heavily, to stump. Hence, probably, its American application.

You would have thought it ridiculous, my fair friends, if your parents had told you that you were to love such a one, and nobody else, as though the heart's affections were a load of wood — as easily *dumped* at one door as another. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 254.

I once got twenty dollars from an omnibus driver for running into my carriage, knocking off a wheel, and *dumping* my wife and child into the street. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 149.

**DUMPING-GROUND.** A low piece of ground where earth, etc., is to be deposited for the purpose of raising its level.

There is much difficulty in getting *dumping grounds* for the dirt from the streets; but the contractors say they can and will do the work. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 18, 1857.

**DUNFISH.** Codfish cured in a particular manner, by which they acquire a *dun* color. They command a higher price, and are much superior to those cured in the ordinary way.

**DUNNING.** A peculiar operation for curing codfish. — *Webster*. Fish for *dunning* are caught early in the spring, and often in February. At the Isles of Shoals, off Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, the cod are taken in deep water, split, and slack-salted; then laid in a pile for two or three months, in a dark store, covered, for the greatest part of the time, with salt hay or eel-grass, and pressed with some weight. In April or May they are opened and piled as close as possible in the same dark store till July or August, when they are fit for use. — *J. Haven*.

**DURHAM BOAT.** A large, open, flat-bottomed boat formerly used on the St. Lawrence, Mohawk, and other rivers. They were used as freight boats only, and were propelled against the current by means of poles.

**DUTCH.** *It beats the Dutch* is an expression often applied, in New York and New England, to any thing astonishing. The earliest instance of its occurrence that I have met with is in a revolutionary song written during the siege of Boston, in 1775:

And besides all the mortars, bombs, cannons, and shells,  
And bullets and guns — as the newspaper tells,  
Our cargoes of meat, drink, and cloaths *beat the Dutch*,  
Now who would not tarry and take t' other touch?

*New Eng. Hist. Register*, April, 1857, p. 191.

**DUTCHMAN.** A flaw in a stone or marble slab, filled up by an insertion.

**DUTIABLE.** Subject to the imposition of duties or customs. — *Webster*. This is a very convenient word, and is in common use, both by the officers of the customs, and by merchants having transactions with them.

The *dutiable* imports this year amount to about two hundred and ten million dollars, nearly one half of which were imported the first quarter of the year. — *Speech of Senator Wilson*, May 24, 1858.

**DYED IN THE WOOL.** Ingrained; thorough.

The democrats, on the authority of Mr. Cameron's letter, are beginning to claim General Taylor as a democrat *died in the wool*, as a democrat of the Jeffersonian order of 1798. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, May 24, 1847.

## E.

**EAGLE.** A gold coin of the United States, of the value of ten dollars, so called from its bearing, on the reverse, the figure of the American eagle. There are also double-eagles of twenty dollars, as well as half and quarter-eagles.

**EAR-BOB.** An ear-drop.

**EAR-MARK.** The mark made on a sheep's ear by its owner; and hence the token or signal by which a thing is known. So used also in the north of England.

**EARLY CANDLE-LIGHT.** Used to denote the beginning of the evening; as, "The meeting will begin at *early candle-light*."

**EARTH ALMOND.** (*Cyperus esculentus*.) A perennial, indigenous to southern Europe, growing in the form of a rush, some three feet high, producing small tubes the size of a common bean, and called by the Valencians "Chufas." It is one of the plants distributed by the Patent Office in 1854. — *White, Gardening for the South*.

**EASY.** A word in common use among merchants and bankers. "Our bank is *easy*," meaning that its loans are not extended, or that money is plentiful. "The money market is *easy*;" or "money is *easy*," i. e. loans of money may easily be procured.

**EAST.** *About east* is about right, in a proper manner. A common slang expression in New England.

I went into the dining-room and sot down afore a plate that had my name writ on a card onto it; and I did walk into the beef and 'taters and thungs *about east*. — *H. Bigelow's Letters in Family Comp.*

**TO EAT, v. a.** To supply with food. A Western use of the word.

*Hoosier.* — Squire, what pay do you give?

*Contractor.* — Ten bits a day

*Hoosier.* — Why, Squire, I was told you'd give us two dollars a day and *eat* us. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 47.

**EDUCATIONAL.** Pertaining to education; derived from education; as, *educational* habits. — *Webster*. The authority cited by Webster for the use of this word is "Smith," — a rather indefinite one. Mr. Pickering says the word was new to him until he saw it in the following extract:

It is believed that there is not an individual of the college who would, if questioned, complain that he has, in any instance, felt himself pressed with opinions which interfered with his *educational* creed. — *Dr. Grant's Report to the Trustees of New Jersey College*, 1815.

**EEL-GRASS.** (*Zostera marina*.) A plant, thrown ashore in large quantities by the sea. It is also called Sea-wrack.

**EEL-SPEAR.** A sort of trident for catching eels. Called, in England, an Eel-hour.

**TO EGG.** To pelt with rotten eggs.

W. S. Bailey, the abolition editor of the Newport (Ky.) News, was *egged* out of Alexandria, Campbell county, in that State, on Monday. — *Dalt. Sun*, Aug. 1, 1837.

**ELEPHANT.** To see the elephant is to gain experience of the world, generally at some cost to the investigator. The phrase doubtless originated from some occurrence at a menagerie.

**E'EN A'MOST,** for *almost*. A vulgarism.

He knows the catechism, and has got the whole Bible *e'eny most* by heart. — *Margaret*, p. 113.

The village boys would raise a party of gals, and start off early in the morning for Toad Hill, where the blackberries was *e'en a'most* as plentiful as mosquitoes in these diggings. — *Lafayette Chronicle*.

O, 't is a dreadful thing to be  
In such distress and misery!  
I'm *e'en a'most* a nat'ral fool,  
All on account o' Sally Poole. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**END,** for *end*. A vulgar pronunciation of the word, which is also common in various parts of England.

**EGYPT.** A nickname given to southern Illinois; according to some, on account of its fertility; according to others, because of the mental darkness of its inhabitants.

**TO ELECT.** To choose, to prefer, to determine in favor of. — *Webster*. The Americanism consists in the construction of this verb with a following infinitive.

In pursuance of the joint resolution of congress "for annexing Texas to the United States," my predecessor, on the third day of March, 1845, *elected* to submit the first and second sections of that resolution to the republic of Texas, as an overture, on the part of the United States, for her admission as a State into our Union. This election I approved. — *Message to Congress*, Dec. 1, 1845.

If it be said that all travellers will not *elect* to go by the express train, and that there should be farther time and greater allowance than five days, many travellers will take other routes, etc. — *Report on Pacific Railroad*.

**ELEGANT,** for *excellent*, applied to articles of food and drink, is very common; as, *elegant* water, *elegant* beef, *elegant* butter! See *Beautiful*.

**EMPIRE STATE.** The State of New York; so called from the enterprise of its people, its wealth, population, extent of canals, railroads, etc.

The *Empire State* is your New York ;  
 I grant it hard to mate her ;  
 Yet still give me the Nutmeg State,  
 Where shall we find a greater ? — *Alma, Yankee Ballads.*

**EMPTYINGS.** (Pron. *emptins*.) The lees of beer, cider, etc.; yeast, or any thing by which bread is leavened.

'T will take more *emptins*, by a long chalk, than this new party's got,  
 To give such heavy cakes as these a start, I tell ye what.

*The Biglow Papers.*

**TO ENGAGE.** To promise or pledge one's self to perform certain duties. In the State of Rhode Island all civil or military officers, instead of being *sworn* to perform the duties which appertain to their offices, and to obey the laws, are *engaged* so to do.

From the formation of this colony in 1647, no person was compelled to take an oath, for the reason, probably, that it involved an act of worship; nor has any person since, under any circumstances, been obliged to take one. An affirmation, on penalty of perjury, has been received with as full effect as an oath. Persons appointed to office, were, in the technical language of Rhode Island, *engaged* to the faithful performance of their duties; and the appointing power at the same time entered into a reciprocal engagement to the officer, wherein they *engage* themselves to the utmost of their power to support and uphold the officer in the lawful performance of his duties. — *Colonial Records of Rhode Island.*

**ENGINE.** (Pron. *injine*, the last syllable rhyming with *line*.) A Fire-engine. See *Machine*.

**ENGINEER.** The engine-driver on our railroads is thus magniloquently designated.

**TO ENJOY.** To *enjoy bad health* is a whimsical yet by no means uncommon expression.

My husband *enjoyed miserable health* for a number of years afore he died. — *Wulson Bedott*, p. 143.

**ENTRY.** The fee paid to the State upon entering an action in the Supreme Court or Court of Common Pleas in Rhode Island.

**ERIE.** Hennepin (ch. XIX.) says, "the Havens called this Lake *Erige*, or *Eriike*, that is, the Lake of the Cat;" but the inhabitants of Canada have softened it into *Erie*. In ch. LXIX. he again mentions it as "Lake *Erie*, or of the Cat."

**ESQUIPOMGOLE.** Another name for Kinnickinnick, or a mixture of tobacco and cornel bark.

**ESQUIRE.** In England this title is given to the younger sons of noblemen, to officers of the king's courts and of the household, to counsellors at law, justices of the peace while in commission, sheriffs, and other gentlemen.

In the United States the title is given to public officers of all degrees, from governors down to justices and attorneys. Indeed, the title, in addressing letters, is bestowed on any person at pleasure, and contains no definite description. It is merely an expression of respect. — *Webster*.

In our own dear title-bearing, democratic land, the title of *esquire*, officially and by courtesy, has come to include pretty much everybody. Of course everybody in office is an *esquire*, and all who have been in office enjoy and glory in the title. And what with a standing army of legislators, an elective and ever-changing magistracy, and almost a whole population of militia officers, present and past, all named as *esquires* in their commissions, the title is nearly universal. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

**EUCRE.** A sort of game played with cards, very much in vogue at the West.

**EVENING.** In the South and West there is no afternoon. From noon till dark is evening. It is strange to an unaccustomed ear to be accosted with “Good *evening*,” at two or three o’clock in the day. Where this usage prevails, immediately after sunset it is “night.”

**TO EVENTUATE.** To happen, to issue, to take effect. A word not unfrequently used in the United States, but rarely used by English writers. — *Worcester*.

**EVERGLADES.** Tracts of land covered with water and grass; peculiar to the Southern States. In Florida the term is applied to portions of the land lower than the coast, and but little above the level of the sea, covered with fresh water. The islands elevated above this swamp are called “hummocks.”

**EVERLASTING.** Very; exceedingly.

New York is an *everlasting* great concern. — *May. Downing, May-day in New York*.

**EVERLASTING.** *Life Everlasting.* (*Gnaphalium.*) So called from its medicinal properties (so the books say), but much more likely from the French “*Immortelle*,” a similar plant, so named from the endurance of its flowers when dried.

**EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.** A singular though very common expression, signifying the same as *every now and then*. It is probably English.

**EXCELLENCY.** A title given by courtesy to governors of States and to ministers of foreign countries.

**EXCHANGEABILITY.** The quality or state of being exchangeable. — *Webster*.

The law ought not to be contravened by an express article admitting the *exchangeability* of such persons. — *Washington*.

**EXCURSIONIST.** A person who goes on a pleasure trip. A common newspaper term.



At a few minutes past seven o'clock, on Saturday evening, the steamer Powhatan was loosed from her moorings, and, with some two hundred *excursionists* on board, steamed down the Potomac River. — *Wash. Evening Star*, July 6, 1858.

**THE EXECUTIVE.** The officer, whether king, president, or other chief magistrate, who superintends the execution of the laws; the person who administers the government; executive power and authority in government. — *Webster*.

**THE EXECUTIVE CITY.** Washington.

**EXPERIENCE.** To give, tell, or relate one's *experience*, are phrases in use among certain sects, and meaning, to relate before a meeting of the church the progress of one's mind in becoming an ardent believer in the doctrines of Christianity.

Now brethren and sisters I'm going to give my *experience*, — to tell how I got religion. — *Western Pulpit*.

At these meetings there was praying and exhorting, and telling *experiences*, and singing sentimental religious hymns. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 214.

**TO EXPERIENCE RELIGION.** To become converted.

I *experienced religion* at one of brother Armstrong's protracted meetings; — and I tell ye, them special efforts is great things — ever since I came out I've felt like a new critter. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 103.

**EXPRESS.** A rapid conveyance of packages and goods, which in the course of the last twenty years has grown up into an enormous business in the United States.

**TO EXPRESS.** To transmit by a special messenger or by telegraph in anticipation of the regular mail.

The President's message will be *expressed* through to Boston, by order of the Postmaster-General. — *Washington Republic*.

**EXPRESS-MAN.** A man belonging to an express office who calls for and brings parcels with a wagon.

**EXPRESS OFFICE.** An establishment which rapidly transmits parcels and goods.

**EXPRESS WAGON.** The wagon in which packages, boxes, etc., are taken to and from an express office.

**EYES SKINNED.** To *keep one's eyes skinned* is to be on the alert.

*Keep your eyes skinned* and your rifles clean; and the minute you find I'm back, set off. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

*Keep your eye skinned* for sign, and listen to my horn. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. 2.

Now, Mr. Arch, I've got you, and if you don't *keep your eye skinned*, I'll lick you till your hide won't hold shucks. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

## F.

**TO FACE THE MUSIC.** To meet the emergency. It corresponds to the English slang phrase, "to come up to the scratch."

The Worcester Spy, in commenting upon the commercial failures, says:

Although such reverses would seem to fall with crushing weight upon some of our most substantial citizens, a strong determination to *face the music* is everywhere manifested. — Sept. 22, 1857.

**FACTORY COTTON.** Unbleached cotton goods, of domestic manufacture.

**FAIR.** Real, genuine; as, "This is not a chalk egg, it is a *fair* one." New York; a word mostly used by children.

**FAIR SHAKE.** A fair trade; a satisfactory bargain or exchange. A New England vulgarism.

**TO FAIR OFF, FAIR UP.** To clear off, clear up. South-western.

He quitted the boat at Natchez, moved to the North, and whenever he see a fog risin', took to his bed and kept it till it *fair'd off*. — *Western Tales*.

There 's going to be a nasty fog to-night, and you had best run the boat till nine, and then tie up — have the steam kept up, and call me if it *fairs up*. — *Major Bunkum, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**TO FALL.** Often improperly used for *fell* in the United States, and in some parts of England; as, "to *fall* a tree," instead of "to *fell* a tree." — *Worcester*.

**FALL.** 1. The fall of the leaf; autumn; the time when the leaves drop from the trees.

This beautifully picturesque expression, which corresponds so well to its opposite *spring*, has been said to be peculiar to the United States. Mr. Pickering notices the following remark in Rees's Cyclopædia: "In North America, the season in which the fall of the leaf takes place derives its name from that circumstance, and instead of *autumn* is universally called the *fall*." — *ART. Deciduous Leaves*. It is used, however, in England in the same sense; although *autumn* is as generally employed there, as *fall* is in the United States.

What crowds of patients the town doctor kills,  
Or how last *fall* he raised the weekly bills. — *Dryden's Juvenal*.

Hash worked the farm, burnt coal in the *fall*, made sugar in the spring, drank, smoked, etc. — *Margaret*, p. 13.

2. The apparatus used in hoisting and lowering goods in warehouses, etc. The term is borrowed from a contrivance for the same purpose used on shipboard.

**FALL-WAY.** The opening or well through which goods are raised and low-

ered by a fall. It is often merely a succession of openings through the several floors of the building, which are generally uninclosed, and the source of frequent accidents.

**FAMILY.** This word is often used to denote a man's wife and children, especially the latter. Hence the phrases, "a man of *family*," "have you any *family*?" and in the West, "How is your father's *family*?"

**FAMILY ROOM.** This term is applied, in the West, to a room generally occupied by the mother and young children to the exclusion of visitors and strangers.

**TO FAN OUT.** To make a show at an examination, alluding probably to the peacock spreading his tail. This term originated at the United States Military Academy at West Point, where for years it was local; but it is now gradually finding its way through the country.

**FANCIES.** Fancy stocks, which see below.

Yesterday was a blue day in Wall street: the *fancies* looked down, and the bears looked up. — *Stock Report, N. Y. Herald.*

**FANCY STOCKS.** A species of stocks which are bought and sold to a great extent in New York. Unlike articles of merchandise, which may be seen and examined by the dealer, and which always have an intrinsic value in every fluctuation of the market, these stocks are wholly wrapped in mystery; no one knows any thing about them, except the officers and directors of the companies, who, from their position, are not the most likely men to tell you the truth. They serve no other purpose, therefore, than as the representative of value in stock gambling. Nearly all the fluctuations in their prices are artificial. A small fluctuation is more easily produced than a large one; and as the calculations are made on the par value, a fluctuation of one per cent. on stock worth \$20 a share, is just five times as much on the amount of money invested as it would be on a par stock. Consequently, if a "Flunkie" can be drawn in, he may be fleeced five times as quick in these as in good stocks. — *A Week in Wall Street*, p. 83.

**FANDANGO.** (Spanish.) A lively dance. In Texas, New Mexico, and California, this term is applied to a ball or dance of any sort.

**FARALLOX.** (Spanish, pron. *farayón*.) A small pointed island in the sea. The meaning of this geographical term, applied to islands on the California coast, has puzzled many.

**FARINA.** Wheaten grits.

**FARZINO, or FARZINER.** A vulgar contraction of *far-as-I-know*, extensively used through New England and New York, including Long Island.

*Gen.* And what kind of characters are the Count and Countess ?

*Doolittle.* Why, I han't been here such a despid while, as to have laint myself much about the matter. But by hearsay, they are a topping sort of people, and pretty much like the Boston folks, full of notions. At times, he is obstropulous. He may be a straight-going cutter, *farzino*, manwards ; but in his dealings with t' other sex, he is a little twistical. — *D. Humphreys, Yankee in England.*

**FAST.** That lives at a rapid rate ; dissipated. A flash word.

Mr. Cephas Bubble is undeniably the *fastest* young man in the market ; for he's not only ashamed of his parentage and birthplace, but he is actually ashamed he was ever a boy. — *Miss Willmont, Substance and Shade*, p. 108.

*Fast* books, like *fast* men, soon exhaust their constitutions. — *Norton's Literary Gazette.*

**FAT-PORK TREE.** A name of the Coco-Plum. Barbadoes.

**FEAST.** A corruption of the Dutch *vies*, nice, fastidious. "I'm *feast* of it," is a literal translation of the Dutch *Ik ben er vies van*, i. e. I am disgusted with, I loathe it. A New York phrase, mostly confined to the descendants of the Dutch.

**TO FEATHER.** A friend has reminded me of this colloquial word, which is used in some parts of New England to denote the appearance of curdled cream, when it rises upon the surface of a cup of tea or coffee, in the form of little flakes, somewhat resembling feathers. We say, "The cream *feathers*." — *Pickering.*

**FEDERAL.** Founded upon or formed by a league, treaty, or compact, between independent States. The government of the United States is a *federal* government, as being formed by the union of several independent States, each surrendering a portion of its power to the central authority. A *federal* is strictly distinguishable from a national government (though in the United States the terms are often used indiscriminately), the latter being properly an aggregation of individual citizens. The Constitution of the United States is pronounced by Mr. Madison to be neither a national nor a federal constitution, but a composition of both. — *Federalist*, No. 39.

**FEDERAL CITY.** Washington, as the seat of government.

**FEDERAL CURRENCY.** The legal currency of the United States. Its coins are the gold *eagle* of ten dollars ; the double eagle, twenty dollars ; half and quarter eagles of proportionate value. The silver *dollar* of one hundred cents, its half, quarter, tenth, and twentieth parts. The coin of ten cents value is called a *dime* ; that of five cents, a *half-dime*. The lowest coin in common use was the copper, now supplanted by the nickel *cent*. Half-cent coins have been made, but few or none of late years. In the commercial cities and along the sea-board, Spanish coins of a dollar and

the fractional parts of a dollar were very common, and passed currently for their original value, until the act of February 21, 1857, which, by reducing the value of the quarter, eighth, and sixteenth of a dollar by twenty per cent., caused the foreign coinage to be suddenly withdrawn from the currency.

Previous to the adoption of our federal currency, *pounds*, *shillings*, and *pence* were used. But these denominations became unstable in value, in consequence of the great depreciation which took place in the paper-money issued by the colonies.

In the year 1702, exchange on England was  $32\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. above par; and silver and gold bore the same relative value to paper-money. The depreciation in the latter continued to increase until, in the year 1749, £1,100 currency was only equal to £100 sterling, or eleven for one. In 1750, a stop was put to the further depreciation of the money of the province of Massachusetts by a remittance from England of £183,000 sterling, in Spanish dollars, to reimburse the expense the province had been at in the reduction of Cape Breton in the old French war. The depreciated money was then called in, and paid off at the rate of a Spanish dollar for forty-five shillings of the paper currency. At the same time a law was made fixing the par of exchange between England and Massachusetts at  $£133\frac{1}{3}$  currency for £100 sterling, and six shillings to the Spanish dollar.

The difference of exchange, or depreciation of the paper-money, regulated in the same manner the currencies of the other colonies. Throughout New England, as has been before stated, it was six shillings to the dollar of 4s. 6d. sterling. In New York, eight shillings, or about seventy-five per cent. depreciation. Pennsylvania, 7s. 6d., or about sixty-six per cent. depreciation. In some of the Southern States, it was 4s. 6d. to the dollar, and accordingly no depreciation. In Halifax currency, including the present British provinces, it was five shillings to the dollar, or about eleven per cent., etc. etc.

In consequence of the above-named diversity in the colonial currencies, in New England the Spanish real of one eighth of a dollar, or  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents, is called a *ninepence*; in New York, a *shilling*; in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, *elevenpence* or a *lery*; and in many of the Southern States, a *bit*. The half real, of the value of one sixteenth of a dollar, is called in New York a *sixpence*; in New England, *fourpence ha'penny*, or simply *fourpence*; in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, a *flip*; and in Louisiana, a *picayune*. The disappearance of the coins from circulation will probably soon cause these names to fall likewise into disuse.

**FEDERALISTS.** An appellation in America given to the friends of the Constitution of the United States, at its formation and adoption; and to the

political party which favored the administration of President Washington. — *Webster*.

TO FEDERALIZE. To unite in compact, as different States; to confederate for political purposes. — *Webster*.

FEED. Used as a noun, for grass; as, "tall *feed*," i. e. high grass.

TO FEEL. To *feel* to do a thing is an expression commonly used by some clergymen, for to feel inclined, to be disposed to do it.

FEET. There are people who consider it witty to use this plural instead of its singular *foot*.

When I was a *feet* high, I was my mammy's joy,  
The ladies all caressed me, and called me pretty boy.  
They said I was a beauty, my face it was complete,  
Except this tarnal ugly nose, but it stuck out a *feet*.

*Western Melodies.*

FEEZE. "To be in a *feeze*," is to be in a state of excitement.

Larcenie is the felonious taking away of another man's personal goods without his knowledge or insight, yet without making any assault upon his person or putting him into a *fease*. — *Code of Laws of Rhode Island*, 1647.

Some years ago, we remember, New York was in its annual *feeze* about mad dogs, and the public mind was somewhat exercised touching the best method of doing murder upon the unhappy canines. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*, Oct. 16, 1848.

When a man's in a *feeze*, there's no more sleep that hitch. — *Sam Shick in England*, ch. 2.

FELLOW or BLACK FELLOW. A black man. Southern.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMAN. One belonging to the same country, a compatriot. This has been censured as an American pleonasm, like *play-actor*, inasmuch as good English usage has conferred this meaning on the word *countryman* alone. (See Pickering, *sub voce*.) Still the want of a more definite expression has been felt in England as well as in this country; and the term *fellow-countryman*, as distinguished from *countryman*, rustic, as the French *compatriote* and German *landsmann* are distinguished from *paysan* and *landmann*, has long been used in America, and in England has been adopted and sanctioned by such authorities as Southey and Lord Brougham.

FELLOWSHIP. Companionship; consort; society. — *Johnson*. With us it is often used in religious writings and discourses, instead of the word *communion*, to denote "mutual intercourse or union in religious worship, or in doctrine and discipline."

TO FELLOWSHIP. A verb formed from the preceding noun. To *fellowship with* is to hold communion with; to unite with in doctrine and

discipline. This barbarism appears with disgusting frequency in the reports of ecclesiastical conventions, etc., and in the religious newspapers generally. Mr. Pickering, in the Supplement to his Vocabulary, said he had just become acquainted with the word. The following is the first example which he gives :

We considered him heretical, essentially unsound in the faith ; and on this ground refused to *fellowship* with him. — *Address to the Christian Public, Greenfield, 1813.*

If the Christian Alliance could not *fellowship* with the Southern slaveholders for gain, they ought to say so outright. — *Speech at the Christian Alliance Conference, May 8, 1847.*

It is also used actively without the preposition, as in the following examples :

How can we expect the fellowship of the preachers of the reformation ? I do not expect it, because our fellowship was predicated upon a vain uniformity of belief. If it were, I could never have *fellowshipped* them. — *Rev. J B Ferguson's Discourse.*

We therefore *fellowship* him in taking a course of preparatory studies for the Christian ministry. — *Board of Madison University, New York, Jan. 1, 1840*

**FEMALE.** A person of the female sex, a woman or girl. There has been much said of the use and abuse of this word, and whether it is proper to designate women by it. Doctor Johnson thus defines *female* : "A she ; one of the sex that brings forth young." Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, in speaking of the word, has the following remarks (we do not indorse her grammatical criticism) : "Where used to discriminate between the sexes, the word *female* is an adjective. We do not object to the term when used necessarily, as an adjective ; but many writers employ the word as a noun, which, when applied to woman, is improper, and sounds unpleasantly, as referring to an animal. To illustrate : almost every newspaper we open, or book we read, will have sentences like these : 'A man and two *females* were seen, etc.,' 'A gentleman was walking with a *female* companion,' 'The *females* were much alarmed,' 'A *female* child,' etc. Now why is such a style of writing tolerated ? Why is the adjective, which applies to all female animals, used as the noun designating woman ? It is inelegant as well as absurd. Expressed correctly, thus, 'A man and two women,' etc., 'A gentleman and a lady,' 'The women were alarmed,' 'A little girl.' Who does not see and *feel* that these last sentences are in better taste, more correct in language, and more definite in meaning ? We call on our sex, on women, to use pen and voice to correct the error of language which degrades them by the animal epithet only."

In the House of Delegates in Maryland, in a debate "on the passage of the bill to protect the reputation of unmarried *females*," the title was amended by striking out the word "*females*," and inserting "women," as the word "*female*" was an Americanism in that application. — *Baltimore Patriot, March, 1839.*

**FEN.** A prohibitory exclamation used by boys in their games ; as, "*Fen*

*play!*" i. e. I forbid you to play. stop! Compare the Latin *defendo*, French *défends*.

**FENCE.** 1. In politics, "to be on the fence" is to be neutral, or to be ready to join the strongest party, whenever it can be ascertained which is so.

When every fool knows that a man represents,  
Not the fellows that sent him, but them *on the fence*,  
Impartially ready to jump either side,  
And make the first use of a turn of the tide. — *Biglow Papers*.

2. A house where stolen goods are received.

**FENCE-MAN.** A politician who is "on the fence."

All the *fence-men*, all the doubters, all the seekers after majorities, will now bustle up, come out, and declare that General Taylor is the most popular man in the country, and that he was always their first choice. — *N. Y. Herald*, Oct. 14, 1848.

**FENCE-RIDING.** The practice of "sitting on the fence," or remaining neutral in a political contest until it can be seen "which way the cat is going to jump."

The South will not vote for a Northern candidate who is nominated as such, nor the North for a Southern man who is nominated on exclusive Southern principles. In this matter there can be no neutral ground. The dividing line is narrow, but distinct; it admits of no *fence-riding*; the candidate must be on one side or the other; and when the time shall come, that either the North or the South adopts a candidate on sectional grounds, it will not be difficult to foretell the issue. — *N. Y. Mirror*.

**FERRY-FLAT.** A flat boat used for crossing, and sometimes for descending, the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Flint says: "The *ferry-flat* is a scow-boat, and, when used as a boat of descent for families, has a roof or covering. These are sometimes in the vernacular phrase called sleds." — *Hist. and Geog. of Miss. Valley*.

**FETICUS** or **VETTIKOST**, vulg. **FÁTTIKOWS**. (*Valerianella*.) Cornsalad, or Lamb's-lettuce. A word used in New York.

**TO FETCH UP.** To stop suddenly. This sense of the word is not noticed in the English dictionaries, nor by Webster. We often hear the phrase, "He *fetched up* all standing," that is, he made a sudden halt. It is a nautical vulgarism, the figure being that of a ship which is suddenly brought to, while at full speed and with all her sails set.

**FEW.** Used as a slang term, *a few* means a little.

"I say, stranger, tell me about the trick of the wells' blowing up; and I'll tell you the trick of the gun, which rather scared you a *few*, as I think." — *Hoffman, Forest Scenes*.

**FID OF TOBACCO.** A quid of tobacco. According to Halliwell, the word *fid* is used in the South of England to signify a small, thick lump.



**FIDDLER.** A kind of small crab, with one large claw and a very small one. It lives on the salt meadows, where it makes its burrows.

*Fiddlers* are a sort of small crabs, that lie in holes in the marshes. The raccoons eat them very much. I never knew any one to try whether they were good meat or no — *Lawson's Carolina*, 1718.

**FIELD-DRIVER.** A civil officer, whose duty it is to take up and impound swine, cattle, sheep, horses, etc. going at large in the public highways, or on common and unimproved lands, and not under the charge of a keeper. New England.

**FIELD MARTIN.** A name sometimes given in the South to the King-Bird.

**FIELD NOTES.** The notes and memoranda made by a surveyor or engineer in the field.

**FILE.** A cloth used for wiping a floor after scrubbing.

**FILE-PAIL, or FILING-PAIL.** A wash-pail.

**FILLIBUSTER.** (Spanish, *filibustero*.) A freebooter. A word brought into common use in consequence of the expeditions against Cuba under Lopez in the year 1851, to the members of which expedition it was applied. It is from the Spanish *filibustero*, which, like the French *flibustier*, is itself a corruption of the English *freebooter*, German *freiheber*, a term imported into England during the Low Country wars of Queen Elizabeth's time, and pretty generally applied to the Buccaneers who ravaged Spanish America about 1680–90. An attempt has been made to deduce the etymology of the word from the Low Dutch *vlie-boot*, i. e. *fly-boat*, a sort of Dutch clipper.

Our modern *fillibusters* are the scum of our society, not men whom "quick bosoms" drive upon desperate adventures; but men whom society has outlawed, men whom society, instead of sending forth with blessings, kicks out with contempt. Broken down gamblers, drunken lawyers, unsuccessful publicans, dissipated shoe-makers, detested swindlers, men under whose feet every plank has broken, are those who now-a-days assume the bearing, and attempt to walk in the footsteps, of Cortez or of Clive. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

**TO FILLIBUSTER.** To acquire by freebooting.

"What was Moses but a fillibuster, whose mission was to dispossess tribes retrograding (or whose civilization was corrupting before matured), and to plant in their stead another people, whose subsequent annals show them to have been at least in no wise superior to our own? What were the Normans, from whom the sovereigns of Great Britain affect to derive their descent, and a portion of their title to the crown, but fillibusters? What the Pilgrim Fathers but fillibusters? What State, what territory in this Union has not been *fillibustered* from the Indians, or purchased from those who had *fillibustered* it? Have ever five years elapsed down to the present time since the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers that some of the monarchies of Europe have not, somewhere, been *fillibustering* something?" — *Letter of Gen. Henningsen to Senator Toombs*, 1857.

**FILLIBUSTERING, FILLIBUSTERISM.** Freebooting, freebootery.

The history of British India is but one vast scheme of *fillibustering*. Alexander the Great was a fillibuster; so was Caesar, and so Napoleon. Nicholas in his day is a fillibuster, and so was Charles the XII. Cortez was a fillibuster, and every foot of Spanish dominion in America was acquired by *fillibustering* alone. Every foot of Mexican soil is now under the dominion, language, laws, usages, and liturgy of *fillibusterism*. — *California Pioneer*, Jan. 1854.

Colonel H. P. Watkins was convicted, March 24, 1854, in the United States District Court, of setting on foot a military expedition against the republic of Mexico — in other words, of *fillibusterism*. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 525.

**FILLIPEEN or PHILLIPINA.** (German, *Vielliebchen*.) There is a custom, common in the Northern States at dinner or evening parties when almonds or other nuts are eaten, to reserve such as are double or contain two kernels, which are called *fillipeens*. If found by a lady, she gives one of the kernels to a gentleman, when both eat their respective kernels. When the parties again meet, each strives to be the first to exclaim, *Fillipeen!* for by so doing he or she is entitled to a present from the other. Oftentimes the most ingenious methods are resorted to by both ladies and gentlemen to surprise each other with the sudden exclamation of this mysterious word, which is to bring forth a forfeit.

In a book on German life and manners, entitled "A Bout with the Burschens, or Heidelberg in 1844," is an account of the existence of this custom in Germany, which at the same time furnishes us with the etymology of the word:

Amongst the queer customs and habits of Germany, there is one which struck me as being particularly original, and which I should recommend to the consideration of turf-men in England; who might, perhaps, find it nearly as good a way of getting rid of their spare cash as backing horses that have been made safe to lose, and prize fighters who have never intended to fight. It is a species of betting, and is accomplished thus: Each of two persons eats one of the kernels of a nut or almond which is double. The first of the two who, after so doing, takes any thing from the hand of the other, without saying *Ich denke*, "I think," has to make the other a present, of a value which is sometimes previously determined, and sometimes left to the generosity of the loser. The presents are called *Vielliebchens*, and are usually trifles of a few florins' value; a pipe, riding-whip, or such like.

**FILLS.** A common mispronunciation for *thills*, the shafts of a wagon or chaise.

**FINEFIED.** Made fine; dandified.

If this new judge is the slicked up, *finefied* sort of a character they pictur' him, I don't want to see him. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 73.

**FIPPENNY BIT, or contracted, FIP.** Fivepence. In Pennsylvania, and several of the Southern States, the vulgar name for the Spanish half-real. (See *Federal Currency*.) *Fippence*, for fivepence, is also provincial in England.

**TO FIRE.** To fling with the hand, as a stone or other missile.

**TO FIRE AWAY.** To begin; to go on. An expression borrowed from the language of soldiers and sailors.

The Chairman rose and said. "We are not ready yet, we must go on in order." Calls for Mr H——. Mr H—— from the midst of the audience said, "Gentlemen, I beg to be excused, I came here to listen, not to speak." Loud cries of "Go ahead!" "Out with it!" "*Fire away!*" Whereupon he commenced. — *N. Y. Herald, Sketch of a Political Meeting.*

**TO FIRE INTO THE WRONG FLOCK** is a metaphorical expression used at the West, denoting that one has mistaken his object, as when a sportsman fires at a different flock from what he intended; it is synonymous with "To bark up the wrong tree."

I said, when General J—— cocked his gun and began his war upon the Senate, he would find he had *fired into the wrong flock*. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 81.

I will make that goney a caution to sinners: I know. He has *fired into the wrong flock* this time. I'll teach him not to do it again. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 107.

**FIRE-EATERS.** A name given by their political opponents to the advocates of extreme Southern views. Of recent introduction.

The *fire-eaters* in the territory and the *fire-eaters* outside do not at all agree in their views of what is proper to be done in reference to voting on the constitution. — *Le-compton (Kansas) Democrat*, Nov. 1857.

The *fire-eaters* are making a very "big boo for a little goose." There is no strength whatever out of the Gulf States; and although they keep Walker very close in his room, he is seen and known enough to make all efforts to elevate him even to the rank of a bold pirate ridiculous. — *N. Y. Evening Post*, 1857.

**FIRE-HUNT.** A hunt for game in the night with the aid of a long-handled pan containing light wood or pitch-pine knots ignited. This is carried on the shoulder of the hunter until he sees the eyes of the animal of which he is in pursuit.

The *fire-hunt* was Sam's hobby. He had often urged me to accompany him, just to see how slick he could shine a buck's eyes, and had drawn from me a promise to go with him on some of these hunts. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II. p. 171.

**FIRE-NEW.** New from the forge; brand-new. — *Johnson*. This old and nearly obsolete expression is sometimes used by us.

You should then have accosted her; and with some excellent jests, *fire-new* from the mint, you should have bunged the youth into darkness. — *Shakspeare, Twelfth Night*, III. 2.

The democracy of Washington, both in and out of Congress, huzzaed, sang, flaunted torches, held mass-meetings, to exult over the liberation of the French; but when the liberation of *Americans* from a much severer and more abject bondage came under consideration, they were and are ferocious for the punishment, by law or vio-

lence, not of the enslavers, but of the liberator! Instantly they are seized with a *fire-in* reverence for the constitution and laws!—*N. Y. Tribune*, April 23, 1848.

**FIRE-WATER.** The name given by some of the Indian tribes to ardent spirits.

Magua's Canada fathers came into the woods, and taught him to drink *fire-water*, and he became a rascal. — *Casper, The Last of the Mohicans*, p. 146.

The *Tees* whiskey, a raw, fiery spirit, has a ready market among the trappers and Indian traders, who find the *fire-water* the most profitable article of trade with the aborigines. — *Repton's Adventures in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 200.

**FIRST.** One, single. An absurd use of the word, which has recently crept into the newspapers and public speeches from the colloquial language of the West. "I won't pay you the *first* red cent," i. e. I will not pay you a single cent.

And here was I, who had been half tempted to fret because a stream of water leaking through the top of the coach could n't alight anywhere else but on my knees, which I could n't move the *first* inch, absurdly fancying that but for that I might have slept. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, May 23, 1849.

Think how many of the young mechanics of New York who are earning their ten or twelve dollars per week, do not save the *first* cent from one year's end to the other, but squander all they ought to lay up in dissipation. — *Ibid.*, Aug. 20, 1849.

I am not aware of having committed the *first* act which should bring upon me the displeasure of the house or any of its members. — *W. A. Gilbert's Speech in House of Representatives*, Feb. 27, 1857.

**FIRST CLASS.** A man in England possesses notable capacity, and people style him capable, or able, or great. In Canada, he is designated *first class*. To speak of a *first class* carriage, or a *first class* prize, or even a *first class* prize ox, may be right enough; but why apply phrases with such poor associations to men of splendid intellect? Is it not enough that a man be *great*? Will he seem any greater when indissolubly associated with a railway van? — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

**FIRST RATE.** Of the first class or order; superior; superexcellent. An expression now in very common use, applied, as most superlatives are in the United States, with very little discrimination. It was formerly said of large and important things, as "a *first rate* ship." Now we hear of "*first rate* pigs," "*first rate* liquors," "*first rate* lawyers."

The *first rate* importance of the subject, and the real merits of the work, are deserving of a portion of our space. — *Westminster Review*, July, 1847.

A young woman wants a situation as a chambermaid. She is a *first rate* washer and ironer, and plain sewer. — *Advertisement in New York Tribune*.

It is also used adverbially; thus, if we ask a person how he is, he replies, "I am *first rate*," i. e. in excellent health, very well.

Mr. Borthwick found the California Indians had acquired this use of the phrase; for, says he:

When you salute them with "How d'ye do," or if you really want to know the state of their health, they invariably answer *first-rate*. So having ascertained that they were all *first-rate*, I made inquiries as to my way. — *Three Years in California*, p. 211.

Well, there's some men whose natural smartness helps them along *first-rate*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 31.

Mary liked all the speakers *first-rate*, except one feller who gin the galls all sorts of a shakin. — *Ibid.* p. 168.

The London Illustrated News, in speaking of Assheton Smith, a celebrated huntsman, says:

In his Leicestershire days he was *first-rate* as a hotseaman . . . . and in one of the worst scenting countries, he has for years shown the *first-rate* sport. — Dec. 6, 1856.

**FIRST SWATHE.** First quality; first chop. New York.

Nothing 'll serve you but a *first-swathe* mug, about twenty-three years old. — C. Mathews, *Puffin Hopkins*.

**FISH FLAKE.** A frame covered with fagots, for the purpose of drying fish. New England. See *Flakes*.

**FISHING-FROG.** See *Devil-Fish*.

**FISTE** (*i* as in *mice*). A small dog, a puppy. Pennsylvania.

**FITS.** "To give one *fits*," means, by a vulgar hyperbole, to give one such a punishing as to throw him into fits, to punish him very severely.

*Mose.* Now look a here, Liz — I go in for Bill Sykes, cause he runs wid our machine; but he must n't come foolin' round my gal, or I'll *give* him *fits*. — *A Glance at New York*.

**ALD. VOORHIES.** — Go on, Mr. Jones.

**WITNESS.** — He said that the Atlas was coming out, to *give* Mayor Wood and myself "*fits*."

**ALD. ELY.** — Was he to give any thing else?

**WITNESS.** — Yes, he said he was going to "give us *jessie*." — *New York City Council Debates*.

Sometimes additional force is given to this epithet by threatening to "give *particular fits*," as in the following example:

Lady Bulwer has just published a new novel, called "Very Successful," in which rumor reports that Sir Edward is to get *particular fits*. — *New York Times*.

**FIX.** A condition; predicament; dilemma.

Some feller jest come and tuck my bundle and the jug of spirits, and left me in this here *fix*. — *Chron. of Pincville*, p. 47.

Are you drunk too? Well, I never did see you in that *fix* in all my live-long born days. — *Georgin Scenes*, p. 163.

The gentleman must be stronger in the faith than ourselves, if he does not find himself in an awkward *fix*. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*, Oct. 18, 1845.

**TO FIX.** In popular use, to put in order; to prepare; to adjust; to set or place in the manner desired or most suitable. Mr. Lyell, in his *Travels in North America*, chap. iii., has the following remarks on this word:

At one of the stations where the train stopped, we heard some young woman from Ohio exclaim, "Well, we are in a pretty *fix*!" and found their dilemma to be characteristic of the financial crisis of these times, for none of their dollar notes of the Ohio banks would pass here. The substantive "*fix*" is an acknowledged vulgarity; but the verb is used in New England by well-educated people, in the sense of the French "*arranger*," or the English "*do*." To *fix* the hair, the table, the fire, means to dress the hair, lay the table, and make up the fire; and this application is, I presume, of Hibernian origin, as an Irish gentleman, King Corney, in Miss Edgeworth's tale of Ormond, says, "I'll *fix* him and his wounds."

This word is equally common in Upper Canada, where it was probably introduced by American settlers:

One of their most remarkable terms is to *fix*. Whatever work requires to be done must be *fixed*. "*Fix* the room" is to set it in order. "*Fix* the table," "*Fix* the fire," says the mistress to her servants; and the things are *fixed* accordingly. — *Backwoods of Canada*, p. 82.

**TO FIX IT.** A vulgarity of recent origin, but now very common. It is heard in such phrases as, "I will not do so and so, *any how you can fix it*," or still worse, "*no how you can fix it*," i. e. not in any way that you can arrange it; not by any means.

A wet day is considerable tiresome, *any way you can fix it*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

If I was an engineer, I'd clap on steam — I'd fire up, I tell you; you would n't get me to stop the engine, *no way you could fix it*. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

The master called them up, and axed them the hardest questions he could find in the book; but he could n't stump 'em *no how he could fix it*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 36.

Workin' ain't genteel nor independent, *no how you can fix it*. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 74.

"According to my notions, riches and grandeur ain't to be compared to religion, *no how you can fix it*; and I always said so," said the Widow Bedott. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 135.

**TO FIX ONE'S FLINT** is a phrase taken from backwoods life, and means the same as to settle, to do for, to dish.

"Take it easy, Sam," says I, "*your flint is fixed*; you are wet through;" and I settled down to a careless walk, quite desperate. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

The Bluenose hante the tools; and if he had, he could n't use them. That's the reason any one a'most can "*fix his flint* for him." — *Ibid.*

**FIXED FACT.** A positive or well established fact, what the French call *un fait accompli*. The origin of the phrase is attributed to the Hon. Caleb Cushing.

The Boston Post, in speaking of the trial of Captain Stetson for piratically running away with a ship and cargo, says :

That he did dispose of a large quantity of oil, and afterwards desert from the vessel, are *fixed facts*. — June, 1847.

In many localities spiritualism has become a *fixed fact*, and its *modus operandi* is well understood by those who have investigated it as a mental science on the platform of cause and effect. — *Christian Spiritualist*.

**FIXINGS.** A word used with absurd laxity, especially in the South and West, to signify arrangements, embellishments, trimmings, garnishings of any kind.

The theatre was better filled, and the *fixings* looked nicer, than in Philadelphia. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 38.

All the fellows fell to getting grapes for the ladies ; but they all had their Sunday *fixins* on, and were afraid to go into the brush. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 42.

A man who goes into the woods, as one of these veteran settlers observed to me, has a heap of little *fixin's* to study out, and a great deal of projecting to do. — *Judge Hall, Letters from the West*, Letter 18.

When we parted I wanted to pay him something handsome for all his trouble ; but I couldn't git him to take nothing but an X, to buy some wimmin *fixins* for the old lady as a compliment from me. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

"Ah!" exclaimed the teamster [to a gentleman who had a good deal of luggage], "what anybody on earth can want with such lots of *fixins*, I'm sure 's dark to me." — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 97.

One half of the country is overflowed in the winter, and t'other half, which is a darned sight the biggest, is covered with cane, pimento, and other *fixins*. — *Porter's South-western Tales*, p. 123.

The following advice was given to the editor of a new Western paper :

Advertise our doins in gineral, such as we got to sell, and throw yourself wide on the *literary fixins* and poetry for the galls ; and, Mister, if you do this with spirit, the whole town will take your paper. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 31.

For a use of the term as applied to food, see *Chicken Fixings*.

**FIZZLE.** A ridiculous failure. The figure is that of wet powder, which burns with a hissing noise and then goes out without producing any effect. It is nearly equivalent to the analogous expression, "a flash in the pan."

In many colleges of the United States, this elegant term is used to denote a blundering recitation. It has been held that to hit just one third of the meaning constitutes "a perfect *fizzle*." — *Hall's College Words*.

With mind and body so nearly at rest that naught interrupted my inmost repose save cloudy reminiscences of a morning *fizzle* and an afternoon flunk, my tranquillity was sufficiently enviable. — *Yale Literary Magazine*, Vol. XV. p. 114.

Here he could *fizzles* mark, without a sigh,  
And see orations unregarded die. — *The Tomahawk*, Nov. 1849.

In Princeton College, the word *blue* is used with *fizzle*, to render it intensive ; as, he made "a *blue fizzle*," "he *fizzled blue*."

The term is used with equally happy effect in political as in college slang.

The trick of the administration to palm off the Washington Union upon the Senate as the National Democrat organ, was a *fizzle* and a shocking failure. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**TO FIZZLE.** 1. To fail in reciting; to recite badly. A correspondent from Williams College says: "Flunk is the common word when some unfortunate man makes an utter failure in recitation. He *fizzles* when he stumbles through at last." A writer in the Yale Literary Messenger thus aptly defines the word: "*Fizzle*. To rise with modest reluctance, to hesitate often, to decline finally; generally, to misunderstand the question." — *Hall's College Words*.

My dignity is outraged at beholding those who *fizzle* and flunk in my presence tower above me. — *The Yale Banger*, Oct. 22, 1847.

2. To cause one to fail in reciting. Said of an instructor. — *Hall*.

*Fizzle* him tenderly,

Bore him with care;

Fitted so slenderly,

Tutor, beware. — *Yale Lit. Mag.* Vol. XIII. p. 321.

**TO FIZZLE OUT.** To be quenched, extinguished; to prove a failure. A favorite expression in Ohio.

The factious and revolutionary action of the fifteen has interrupted the regular business of the Senate, disgraced the actors, and *fizzled out*! — *Cincinnati Gazette*.

Is the new hotel [one called the Burnet House] to be given up, or to go on? To go on. It cannot be possible, after all that has been said and done about a "splendid hotel," that our enterprising business men will let it *fizzle out*. — *Ibid*.

You never get tired of a good horse. He don't *fizzle out*. You like him better and better every day. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 55.

**FLAKES.** Long poles laid upon crotched posts driven into the ground, parallel to each other, about two feet apart and covered with brush, upon which codfish are spread to dry.

The owners of vessels [in fishing districts] have a *flake-yard* in the vicinity of the landing-places, to which the fish are carried on being landed. — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman*.

Fish *flakes* were spread upon the beach, and the women were busy in turning the cod upon them. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**TO FLASH IN THE PAN.** To fail of success. A metaphor borrowed from a gun, which, after being primed and ready to be discharged, sometimes *flashes in the pan*.

Mr. Lowell, in his poem on the school-house, speaks of the dame, who, prim and calm,

———— could detect at once

Who *flashed in the pan*, and who was downright dunce.



**FLASH BOARD.** A board placed upon a mill-dam when a river is low, in order to obtain a greater fall of water. It is temporary, being placed and removed from the dam as circumstances require.

**FLAT.** 1. In America this word is applied to low alluvial lands. "The Mohawk flats" is a term universally applied to the valley of the Mohawk river, on either side of which are alluvial lands. See *Bottom Lands*. It is also applied to river shoals, where they are of much extent.

In New England, all the spaces between high and low-water mark on the sea-shore, or in bays, inlets, etc., where the sea flows and ebbs.

The title of the Commonwealth, as owner thereof in fee, to all the *flats* or lands, . . . below the ordinary line of riparian ownership, from which the natural flow of the tides in Boston harbor has been cut off by dams or otherwise, and also the *flats* below said line, is hereby asserted and declared, etc., etc. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

2. A broad-brimmed, low-crowned, straw hat, worn by women.

3. A species of flat-bottomed boat, used on the Mississippi and other rivers. See *Flat-Boat*.

4. A rejection, dismissal. See *To Flat*.

**TO FLAT.** To reject a lover; as, "Miss Deborah gave Ike the *flat*," "He's got the *flat*," "She *flatted* him." Western.

**FLAT-BOAT.** A rude sort of vessel used for transporting produce, etc., down the Mississippi River. It is thus described by Flint: "They are simply an oblong ark, with a roof slightly curved from the centre to shed rain. They are generally above fifteen feet wide, and from fifty to eighty and sometimes an hundred feet in length. The timbers of the bottom are massive beams, and they are intended to be of great strength, and to carry a burden of from two to four hundred barrels. Great numbers of cattle, hogs, and horses are conveyed to market in them. We have seen family boats of this description, fitted up for the descent of families to the lower country, with a stove, comfortable apartments, beds, and arrangements for commodious habitation. — *Hist. and Geogr. of Miss. Valley*. These boats are also called Kentucky Flats and Broadhorns. See *Ark*.

Finally one of 'em ses, "Don't make fun of the unfortunate; he's hardly got over bein' blowed up yet. Let's make up a puss for him." Then they all throwed in and made up five dollars. As the spokesman handed me the change, he axed me, "Whar did you find yourself arter the 'splotion?" "In a *flat-boat*, ses I." — *Widow Bagby's Husband*.

**TO FLAT-BOAT.** To transport in a flat-boat.

The first enterprise of Josiah Hedges on his own account was a trading excursion to New Orleans with fruit, which he *flat-boated* from Wheeling to that point. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 29, 1858.

**FLAT-BOATMAN.** A hand employed on a flat-boat.

**FLAT BROKE.** Utterly bankrupt, entirely out of money. The California correspondent of the Boston Post, in speaking of the emigration, says: Many emigrants, arriving in that state of collapsity termed *flat broke*, staid at Los Angeles because they could n't go on.

**TO FLAT OUT.** To collapse, to prove a failure. A Western phrase applied to a political meeting; as, "The meeting *flatted out*."

**FLAT-FOOTED.** Downright, resolute; firmly, resolutely. A term belonging to the Western political slang, with which the halls of congress, as well as the newspapers, are now deluged.

Col. M—— attempted to define his position, but, being unable, exclaimed: I'm an independent, *flat-footed* man, and am neither for nor against the mill-dam. — *Tennessee Newspaper*.

At the forks of the road there lived a brawny, stalwart son of Vulcan. He was a man of strong will, and a zealous disciple of Tom Paine. His herculean frame, and bold, *flat-footed* way of saying things, had impressed his neighbors, and he held the rod in terrorem over them. — *Harper's Mag.*, Sept. 1858.

Mr. Pickens, of South Carolina, has come out *flat-footed* for the administration — a real red-hot democrat, dyed in the wool — denounces Mr. Calhoun — and is ready now to take any high office. But the mission to England is beyond his reach. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 30, 1846.

**FLAT TOP.** See *Iron Weed*.

**FLEA-BANE.** (*Erigeron canadense*.) One of the most hardy and common weeds. It propagates itself rapidly, and, since the discovery of America, has been introduced and spread through most countries in Europe. — *Bigelow's Flora Bost.*

This plant is sold by the Shakers for its medical properties, which are astringent and diuretic.

**FLICKER.** See *Clape*.

**FLITTER.** A corruption of the word *fritter*, a pan-cake.

**FLOOR.** Used in congress, in this expression, *to get the floor*; that is, to obtain an opportunity of taking part in a debate. The English say, *to be in possession of the House*. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**TO FLOUR.** To grind and bolt, to convert into flour. — *Webster*. A word used in those parts of the country where there are mills for grinding wheat. Ex. "The mill can *flour* two hundred barrels a day," i. e. it can make so many barrels of flour.

**FLOURING-MILL.** A grist-mill.

**FLUMMEX.** In colleges, applied to a poor recitation; a failure. — *Hall's College Words*.

**TO FLUMMUX.** To give in, give up; to die. The word is used in England, but not in the same manner. According to Halliwell it means, "to overcome, frighten, bewilder, foil, disappoint, or mistify; also, to maul or mangle." — *Dict. of Arch. and Prov. Words.*

Perhaps Parson Hyme did n't put into Pokerville for two mortal hours; and perhaps Pokerville did n't mizzle, wince, and finally *flummix* right beneath him. — *Field, Drama in Pokerville.*

Be ye men of mighty stomachs,  
Men that can't be made to *flummux*.

*Oyster War of Accomac, N. Y. Tribune, April, 1849.*

I thought I should a *flummuxed*! The dogs they sidled back; an' Ike cussed; and I lay down an' rolled, till I was so full I thought I should a bust my biler. — *Mike Hooter's Bear Story.*

**FLUNK.** A backing out; a total failure in a college recitation.

The Sabbath dawns upon the poor student burdened with the thought of the lesson or *flunk* of the morrow morning. — *Yale Tomahawk, Feb. 1851.*

In moody meditation sunk,  
Reflecting on my future *flunk*. — *Songs of Yale, 1853.*

**TO FLUNK.** To fail utterly in a college examination.

They know that a man who has *flunked*, because too much of a genius to get his lesson, is not in a state to appreciate joking. — *Amherst Indicator, Vol. I. p. 253.*

**TO FLUNK OUT.** To retire through fear; to give up, back out.

Why, little one, you must be cracked, if you *flunk out* before we begin. — *J. C. Neal.*

We must have at least as many subscribers as there are students in college; or *flunk out*. — *The Crayon, Yale Coll. 1823.*

**FLUNKY.** 1. A class of people, who, unacquainted with the manner in which stocks are bought and sold, and deceived by appearances, come into Wall street without any knowledge of the market. The consequence is, they make bad investments, or lose their money. These the brokers call *flunkies*. — *A Week in Wall Street, p. 81.*

A broker who had met with heavy losses, exclaimed, "I'm in a bear-trap — this won't do. The dogs will come over me. I shall be mulct in a loss. But I've got time; I'll turn the scale; I'll help the bulls operate for a rise, and draw in the *flunkies*." — *Ibid. p. 90.*

2. In college parlance, says Mr. Hall, in his College Words, "one who makes a complete failure; one who *flunks*."

I bore him safe through Horace,  
Saved him from the *flunkies's* doom.

*Yale Lit. Mag. Vol. XX.*

**FLUTTER-WHEEL.** A very small water-wheel, used where there is but little head of water. Western. Probably from its rapid motion.

**FLIER.** A venture. To take a *flier* in stocks, is the expression used in Wall street when persons not stockbrokers, or dealers in stocks, occasionally make a venture. Their orders are given to the regular brokers, who execute them for a commission, without becoming personally responsible to the parties with whom they make the transaction.

**TO FLY OFF THE HANDLE.** To break out, become excited; also, to break a promise.

When I used to tell minister this, as he was *flying off the handle*, he'd say, Sam, you're as correct as Euclid, but as cold and dry.—*Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 149.

Now and then one of the girls would promise, and then *fly off at the handle*; but most all contrived some reason for giving me the bag to hold.—*McClintock, Beedle's Marriage*.

**TO FLY AROUND.** To stir about, to be active. A very common expression.

Come, gals, *fly round*, and let's get Mrs. Clavers some supper.—*A New Home*, p. 13.

Fetch on the pies and puddings. *Fly round* and change the plates.—*Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 167.

**FLYING FISH.** See *Sea Robin*.

**FOLKS.** This old word is much used in New England, instead of "people" or "persons." 1. For the persons in one's family; as in this common phrase, "How do your *folks* do?" that is, your family. 2. For people in general; as in expressions of this kind: "What do *folks* think of it?" etc. Dr. Johnson observes that "it is now only used in familiar or burlesque language."—*Pickering*.

Old good man Dobson of the green  
Remembers he the tree has seen,  
And goes with *folks* to shew the sight.—*Swift*.

**FOO-FOO.** In New York, a slang word, meaning an "outsider," or one not in the secrets of a society, party, or band.

Don't know what a *foo-foo* is? Well, as you're a greenhorn, I'll enlighten you. A *foo-foo*, or an outsider, is a chap that can't come the big figure.—*A Glance at New York*.

**FOOL-FISH.** (Genus *Monocanthus*. Cuvier.) The popular name of the Long-finned File-fish. "Our fishermen apply to it the whimsical name of Fool-fish," says Dr. DeKay, "in allusion to what they consider its absurd mode of swimming with a wriggling motion, its body being sunk, and its mouth just on a level with the water."—*Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**FOOT.** "To *foot* it," is familiar English; but the Western phrase, "To take his *foot* in his hand," is assuredly a bold stretch of language.

**FOOT-STOVE.** A contrivance for keeping the feet warm, formerly carried by old ladies to the meeting-house on Sundays, and used by huckster-women in the markets. It consists of a small square tin box, perforated with holes and inclosed in a wooden frame, with a wire handle. It has a door on one side, through which is thrust a small square iron dish of live coals, sprinkled over with a few ashes.

**FOR,** before the infinitive particle "to," so frequent in early writers, but now deemed a vulgarism, is still retained in the West.

**FORBIDDEN FRUIT.** (*Citrus paradisi.*) The Paradise Orange, a fruit almost as large as a shaddock. Jamaica, W. Ind.

**FORCE.** In the South, the slaves of a planter able to work in the field.

**FOREFATHERS' DAY.** In New England, the day on which the pilgrims landed at Plymouth (the 22d December).

**FORE-HANDED.** To be *fore-handed* is to be in good circumstances, to be comfortably off. Compare *Aforehand*. The expression is much used in the interior parts of the country.

Many of the new houses which have been built, have been built by mechanics, *fore-handed* men, as we say in New England, who have accumulated small sums. — *Providence Journal*.

Mrs. Ainsworth made so long a visit among her Eastern friends, who are now *fore-handed* folks, that she has come back imbued most satisfactorily with a loving appreciation of the advantages of civilization — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 50.

**FOREIGNER.** 1. A person born out of the United States, including naturalized citizens.

2. In some of the Southern States the term is also applied to persons born in another State. Thus, Virginians call all other Americans *foreigners*.

**FORE PAY.** "There are two bad paymasters, no pay and *fore pay*." This proverbial expression is frequently heard in the West.

**FOREST CITY.** Cleveland, in the State of Ohio.

**TO FORK OVER.** To hand over; to pay over, as money. A slang expression of frequent use.

He groaned in spirit at the thought of parting with so much money. There was, however, no help for it, so he *forked over* the five dollars. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*

A would-be prophet down South lately said in one of his sermons, that "he was sent to redeem the world and all things therein." Whereupon a native pulled out two five dollar bills of a broken bank, and asked him to *fork over* the specie for them. — *Newspaper*.

What more right has a man to say to you, "stand and deliver your name," than to say, "stand and *fork over* your purse?" — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 17.

**TO FORK UP.** To pay up; as, "Jonathan, I've trusted you long enough; so *fork up*."

**FORKS.** In the plural, the point where a road parts into two; and the point where a river divides, or rather where two rivers meet and unite in one stream. Each branch is called a *fork*. — *Webster*.

Finally, the Pawnees abandoned the field to their victorious enemies, leaving sixty of their warriors upon the ensanguined battle ground. The defeated party were pursued only a short distance, and then permitted to return without further molestation to their village, at the *Forks* of the Platte." — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 50.

About the same time the village on Republican *Fork* of Kansas was also abandoned, and its inhabitants united with the Loups. — *Ibid*.

**FORNENT.** Opposite to. This Scottish word is now much used in Pennsylvania and the Western States.

**TO FORT IN.** To intrench in a fort.

A few inhabitants *forted in* on the Potomac. — *Marshall's Washington*.

**FORTINER.** (*For-aught-I-know*.) This remarkable specimen of clipping and condensing a phrase approaches the Indian method of forming words. The word is very common through New England, Long Island, and the rest of New York. See *Farziner*.

**FORTNIGHT.** A Western man has remarked that this word is rarely heard in the new States, where, instead, they say "two weeks."

**FORWARDING MERCHANT.** One whose business it is to receive and forward goods for others. The internal navigation and trade of the United States, so great is the extent of our country, requires *forwarding merchants* in all the principal towns.

**FORCH,** for *fetched*, is used by ignorant persons, especially the blacks at the South.

**FOUND.** Ignorant and careless speakers say, "The prisoner was *found* ten dollars," instead of he was *fin*ed. They want to form the past tense, and the proper word sounds too much like the present *find*. Comp. *Held*.

**TO FOURFOLD.** To assess in a fourfold ratio. Mr. Pickering quotes this word from Webster's Dictionary, and observes that it is peculiar to the State of Connecticut. Dr. Webster afterwards expunged it.

**FOUR PENCE HA'PENNY, or FOUR PENCE.** The New England name of the Spanish half real. See *Federal Currency*.

**TO FOX.** To *fox* boots is to repair them by adding new soles, and sur-

rounding the feet with new leather. — *Worcester*. I am told the term is used in Ireland.

**FOX FIRE.** Rotten wood which makes a phosphorescent light. It may be a corruption of *phosphorus*.

**FOX GRAPE.** (*Vitis labrusca*.) A large grape common on the borders of streams. The surface of the leaf is characterized by its foxy pubescence. The Southern *fox grape* is *Vitis Vulpina*. Its fruit is larger, and its taste more agreeable, than the former.

**FOXED, or FOXY.** A term applied to timber or paper, when discolored by incipient decay. Also used in England.

**TO FRAGGLE.** To rob. A word used in Texas.

**FREE LABOR.** Labor performed by freemen, in contradistinction to that of slaves, a term now greatly in vogue both at the North and South.

So, wheresoe'er our destiny sends forth  
Its widening circles to the South or North,  
Where'er our banner flaunts beneath the stars  
Its mimic splendors and its cloud-like bars,  
There shall *Free Labor's* hardy children stand,  
The equal sovereigns of a slaveless land.

*J. G. Whittier, The Panorama.*

**FREE LOVE.** Freedom of the affections; the right to consort with those with whom we have "elective affinities," regardless of the shackles of matrimony. Within the last few years several associations have been organized in the North, for the purpose of carrying this doctrine into practical effect.

At the convention in Rutland, last week, after an afternoon spent in denouncing the Bible, the marriage institution, etc., and in laudation of "spiritualism," "vegetarianism," and "*free love*," Elder Grant, the Millerite, got up and repeated 1st Timothy iv. 1, 3, "Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, commanding to abstain from meats," etc. Whether because this apt passage proved unpalatable, or for some other reason, the convention incontinently adjourned. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 3, 1858.

**FREE LOVER.** An advocate of the free love doctrine.

A "reform convention" assembled at Rutland, Vermont, on Friday. About a thousand persons—abolitionists, spiritualists, and *free lovers*—attended, the spiritualists predominating. — *Balt. Sun*, June 28, 1858.

**FREE-LOVISM.** The doctrine of free love.

**FREE SOIL.** Freedom of the soil belonging to the United States, and not yet formed into States, from negro slavery.

The people are roused ! They 've slumbered too long,  
While Freedom grew weak, and Tyranny strong.  
But now they are coming from hill and glen,  
They come to the rescue—the *Free-Soil* men.

*Mrs. Child, Free Soil Song.*

**FREE-SOILER.** An advocate of the exclusion of slavery from the territories belonging to the United States. A word which first came into use in the year 1848.

I only want to see the first *free-soiler* here. I'll drop the first one that opens his mouth for abolition cusses. I'll be dog-gauned if I don't — *Gladstone, Englishmen in Kansas*, p. 48.

**FREE-SOILISM.** The principles or doctrines of the advocates of freedom in the territories in opposition to those of slavery.

I tell you, mark every scoundrel among you that is the least tainted with *free-soilism* or abolitionism, and exterminate him. Neither give nor take quarter from them. — *Speech of Gen. Stringfellow in the Kansas Legislature.*

**FREE STATES.** Those States in which negro slavery does not exist.

Equal and exact justice to both slave and *free States* is the only ground upon which the Southern States can maintain their claim to equal rights in the Federal Union. — *Richmond Enquirer*, Aug. 1858.

**FREEZE.** A Southern term for frosty weather.

The effects of the late *freeze* have been severely felt. — *Charleston Paper.*

**TO FREEZE.** To have a longing desire for any thing. South-western.

This child has felt like going West for many a month, being half *froze* for buffalo meat and mountain doins. — *Ruxton's Far West.*

**FRESH, n.** 1. An abbreviation for Freshman.

2. Used locally in Maryland for a stream distinct from the tide water ; as, "Allen's *Fresh*," "Pile's *Fresh*." The lands in Talbot County, Md., are divided into *freshes* and salts.

**FRESH, adj.** Forward, bold ; as, "don't make yourself too *fresh* here."

**FRESHET.** A flood, or overflowing of a river, by means of heavy rains or melted snow ; an inundation. — *Webster.*

This word is used in the Northern and Eastern States. That it is an old English word is evinced by the following extract from the Description of New England, written and published in England, in 1658 :

"Between Salem and Charlestown is situated the town of Lynn, near to a river, whose strong *freshet* at the end of the winter filleth all her banks, and with a violent torrent vents itself into the sea." — p. 29.

It appears to be now confined to America ; but the word *fresh* is still used in the north of England and in Scotland in precisely the same sense. See Pickering's Vocabulary for a full discussion of the word and its uses.



**FRIJOL** (pron. *fre-hó-les*). *Spanish*. Kidney beans. A common article of food upon the plains and on the Mexican frontier.

**FROE**. An iron wedge. New England.

The shingle-maker stands with *froe* in one hand and mallet in the other, endeavoring to rive a billet of hemlock on a block. — *Margaret*, p. 159.

"He beat his head all to smash with a *froe*," said one. "No, it was with an axe," said another. — *Ibid.* p. 323.

**FROG**. The iron plate where two lines of railroad intersect; probably so called from its resemblance to the "frog" of a horse's foot.

**FROLIC**. A favorite term in the West for a party.

**FROMETY, FRUMTY**. Wheat boiled with milk, to which sugar and spice are added. — *Hallamshire Glossary*. Used in Maryland.

**FROST-FISH**. (Genus, *morrhua*.) A small fish which abounds on our coast during the winter months. It is also called Tom-cod. — *Storer, Fishes of Massachusetts*.

**FROST-GRAPE**. See *Chicken-Grape*.

**FROSTWORT**. (*Cistus canadensis*.) A medicinal plant prepared by the Shakers, and used for its astringent, and tonic properties.

**FROUGHY**. *Frough* is provincial in the north of England, and means any thing loose, spongy, or easily broken; often applied to wood, as "brittle" is to mineral substances. — *Brockett's Glossary*. "*Froughy* butter" is rancid butter.

This word is in common use in many parts of New England. It is doubtless a corruption of *frough*, which is sometimes used here. — *Pickering*.

**FROWCHEY**. (Dutch, *wrouwteje*.) A furbelowed old woman. Local in New York and its vicinity.

**TO FRUMP**. To mock; to insult. A very old word, occurring in the dictionaries of Cotgrave and Minshew.

I was abas'd and *frumped*, sir. — *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

This old word, though long out of use in England, still lingers among the descendants of the first settlers in New England.

The sleighs warped from side to side; the riders screamed, cross-bit, *frumped*, and hooted at each other. — *Margaret*, p. 174.

**FUFFY**. Light; soft; puffy. Used in Yorkshire, England, and preserved in some parts of New England.

She mounted the high, white, *fuffy* plain; a dead and unbounded waste lay all about her. — *Margaret*, p. 168.

**FULL CHISEL.** At full speed; an equivalent for the phrases "full drive" and "full split," both of which are used in England and in this country. A modern New England vulgarism.

"Oh yes, sir, I'll get you my master's seal in a minute." And off he set *full chisel*.  
—*Sam Slick in England*, ch. ii.

The moose looked round at us, shook his head a few times, then turned round and fetched a spring right at us *full chisel*. — *John Smith's Letters*.

At that the boys took arter them *full chisel*, and the galls run as if a catamount had been arter them. — *Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 46.

And so the Yankee staves along  
Full *chisel*, hitting right or wrong;  
And makes the burden of his song,  
By Golly! — *Anonymous*.

**FULL TEAM.** A powerful man; a man of consequence.

**FUNERAL.** "To preach a *funeral*." In some parts of the West, the funeral sermon is preached, not at the time of the burial, but long after, sometimes even a year after the death of the person. The custom arose, probably, from the difficulty of obtaining a competent "preacher" in a thinly settled country. After so long an interval, "preaching the funeral," which is almost always accompanied by a feast, becomes rather an occasion of merrymaking than of lamentation.

**TO FUNERALIZE.** To perform the clerical duties preparatory to a funeral. Southern.

**FUNK.** 1. Fear, or sensibility to fear; cowardice.

So my friend's fault is timidity. . . . I grant, then, that the *funk* is sublime, which is a true and friendly admission. — *Letter in Literary World*, Nov. 30, 1850.

2. A coward.

**TO FUNK.** To make an offensive smoke or dust. When the smoke puffs out from a chimney place or stove, we say "it *funks*." The term is also applied to the dust which is caused by a vehicle on a road. The expression, in the former sense at least, is used in England.

**TO FUNK OUT.** To "back out" in a cowardly manner.

To *funk* right out o' political strife aint thought to be the thing,  
Without you deacon off the tune you want your folks should sing.

*Biglow Papers*.

**TO FUNKIFY.** To frighten; to alarm. New England.

Scared! says he, serves him right then; he might have knowed how to feel for other folks, and not *funkify* them so peskily — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. viii.

**FURROW.** To draw a straight furrow is to live uprightly or decorously.

Governor B. is a sensible man;

He stays to his home and looks arter his folks;

He *draws his furrow as straight as he can,*  
And into nobody's tater-patch pokes. — *Biglow Papers.*

TO FUSH OUT. To come to nothing. Comp. *To Fizzle out.*

FYKE. (Dutch, *fuik*, a weel, bow-net.) The large bow-nets in New York harbor, used for catching shad, are called *shad-fykes*.

## G.

GABBLEMENT. Gabble, prate. A Southern word.

"This court's got as good ears as any man," said the magistrate; "but they aint for to hear no old woman's *gabblement*, though it's under oath." — *Chron. of Pineville.*

GAD. A long stick or switch, especially one used for driving oxen. So used also in the north of England.

I looked around and saw where the three had set down on a log. I measured the length of the foot, and found where they had cut a big *gad*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*, Oct. 1848.

GAFF. An artificial spur put upon game-cocks; so called from its resemblance to fishing and nautical instruments, properly *gaffle*.

GAL. A vulgar pronunciation of *girl*, alike common in England and America.

At length came in the Deacon's Sall  
From milking at the barn, sir;  
And faith she is as good a *gal*  
As ever twisted yarn, sir. — *Song, Yankee Doodle.*

GAL-BOY. A romping girl, a hoyden, a tom-boy.

GALE. Among the ladies, a state of excitement; as, "Mrs. A—— was in quite a *gale* on New Year's Day."

The ladies, laughing heartily, were fast getting into what, in New England, is sometimes called a *gale*. — *Brooke, Eastford.*

GALL. 1. A kind of low land in Florida. It consists of a matted soil of vegetable fibres, spongy and treacherous to the foot, unpleasant as well as dangerous to crop. — *Vignoles, Florida*, p. 91.

Mr. S., living near the Oclawaha, while crossing a bay gall, or saw grass, in company with his son, last Wednesday, was seriously injured by the attack of an alligator. The water in the *gall* was about knee deep. — *East Florida Paper.*

2. (Ger. *qualle*.) A name applied by the New York children to the jelly-fishes. The medusæ, or sea-nettles (*Discophora*), they call *stinging galls* (called also in some parts of England *stang-fishes*). The

ovoidal phosphorescent jelly-fishes (*Otenophora*) they call *lightning-galls*.

GALLINIPPER. An insect pest at the South resembling a mosquito, but much larger.

GALLOWS. Showy, dashing. New York slang.

*Mose.* Lizzy, you're a *gallus* gal, any how!

*Lizzy.* I ain't nothin' else. — *A Glance at New York*.

On another occasion, Mose goes off in raptures at the personal appearance and many accomplishments of his sweetheart, and exclaims:

"Look, what a *gallus* walk she's got. I've strong suspicions I'll have to get slung to her one of these days"

GALLOWSES. Suspenders, braces. They are also so called in some parts of England.

His kilts [pantaloons] were supported by no braces or *gallowses*, and resting on his hips. — *Margaret*, p. 9.

GAM. A social visit. A seafaring term.

When two whalers meet in any of the whaling grounds, it is usual to have a *gam*, or mutual visit, for the purpose of interchanging the latest news, comparing reckoning, discussing the prospect of whales, and enjoying a general chit-chat. — *Browne's Whaling Cruise*, p. 76.

GAMBREL. A hipped roof to a house, so called from its resemblance to the hind leg of a horse, which by farriers is termed a *gambrel*.

Here and there was a house in the then new style, three cornered, with *gumbrelled* roof and dormer windows. — *Margaret*, p. 33.

GANDER-PULLING. A brutal species of amusement practised in Nova Scotia. It is also known at the South. We quote Judge Halliburton's account of it from the Sayings and Doings of Sam Slick:—

"But describe this *gander-pulling*"

"Well, I'll tell you how it is," says I. "First and foremost, a ring-road is formed, like a small race-course; then two great long posts is fixed into the ground, one on each side of the road, and a rope made fast by the eends to each post, leavin' the middle of the rope to hang loose in a curve. Well, then they take a gander and pick his breast as clean as a baby's, and then grease it most beautiful all the way from the breast to the head, till it becomes as slippery as a soaped eel. Then they tie both his legs together with a strong piece of cord, of the size of a halyard, and hang him by the feet to the middle of the swingin' rope, with his head downward. All the youngsters, all round the country, come to see the sport, mounted a horseback.

"Well, the owner of the goose goes round with his hat, and gets so much a-piece in it from every one that enters for the '*Pullin*;' and when all have entered, they bring their horses in a line, one arter another, and at the words, 'Go a-head!' off they set, as hard as they can split; and as they pass under the goose, make a grab at him, and whoever carries off the head wins.

"Well, the goose dodges his head and flaps his wings, and swings about so, it aint no easy matter to clutch his neck; and when you do, it's so greasy, it slips right through the fingers like nothin'. Sometimes it takes so long, that the horses are fairly beat out, and can't scarcely raise a gallop; and then a man stands by the post, with a heavy loaded whip, to lash 'em on, so that they may n't stand under the goose, which aint fair. The whoopin', and hollerin', and screamin', and bettin', and excitement, beats all; there aint hardly no sport equal to it. It is great fun to *all except the poor goosey-gander.*"

**GAP.** 1. This pure English word is used properly of any breach of continuity, as of the line of a saw's edge, or of the line of a mountain, as projected on the horizon. Hence it is applied to such openings in a mountain as are made by a river, or even a high road. Thus the *Water-Gap*; and, in Virginia, *Brown's Gap*, *Rockfish Gap*, etc.

2. An opening in a fence. A *Slip gap* is a place provided in a fence, where the bars may be slipped aside and let down.

**GAR;** also **ALLIGATOR GAR.** A species of pike found in the southern rivers. It grows to a large size, and has been known to fight with the alligator.

**GARDEN CITY.** Chicago; so called from the number of its gardens.

**GARDEN SPOT.** A term applied to the rich Silurian limestone region in Kentucky and Tennessee.

So characteristic are the agricultural peculiarities stamped upon the surface of every county, that it has given rise to that generally recognized division of the State known as the "Blue Grass" county of Kentucky, justly celebrated for its fertility and consequent wealth. The unbroken tracts lying towards the heads of the streams are indeed the "*Garden Spots*" of the State. We even hear the inhabitants of this part of Kentucky frequently styled "Blue-grass men" in contradistinction to the "Mountain men," residents of the adjacent hill and mountain country. — *Owen's Geology of Kentucky.*

**GARRISON.** At the West the term is oftener applied to the post itself than to those who hold it. Thus old, empty, and deserted forts, those that have been actually abandoned, and are devoted to decay, are almost universally styled the "*garrisons*," even though a soldier had not put a foot in them for a quarter of a century. — *J. Fennimore Cooper.*

**GAT, or GATE.** (Dutch, *gat*, a hole, *gap*.) A narrow passage; a strait. A term applied to several places in the vicinity of New York, as *Barnegat*, and *Hell-Gate* (formerly *Helle-gat*). As respects this latter name, Mr. Irving, in a note to his *Knickerbocker* (chap. iv.), remarks:

Certain mealy mouthed men of squeamish consciences, who are loth to give the devil his due, have softened the above characteristic name to *Hurl-gate*, forsooth! Let those take care how they venture into the Gate, or they may be hurled into the Pot before they are aware of it. The name of this strait, as given by our author, is supported by the map in Vander Donck's History, published in 1656 — by Ogilvy's History of America, 1671 — as also by a journal still extant, written in the

16th century, and to be found in Hazard's State Papers. And an old MS. written in French, speaking of various alterations in names about this city, observes, "*De Helle-gat, Trou d'Enfer, ils ont fait Hell-gate, Porte d'Enfer.*"

**TO GATIER.** (Pron. *gether*.) Universally used in the West for to take up; as, "I *gathered* a stick."

**TO GAUM.** To smear. "Put the child's apron on, and don't let her *gaum* herself all over with molasses." Local in England.

**GAYEL.** (Fr. *javelle*.) A quantity of grain sufficient to make a sheaf. This old word, which is in use in the east of England, is now very frequently employed in describing the operation of American reaping machines.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY.** A representative body having legislative powers, and authorized to enact laws in behalf of some community, church, or State. — *Worcester*.

**GENERAL COURT.** A legislative body. — *Worcester*.

**GENERAL TREAT.** A *general treat* is a treat of a glass of liquor given by a person in a tavern to the whole company present.

I nearly got myself into a difficulty with my new acquaintances by handing the landlord a share of the reckoning, for having presumed to pay a part of a *general treat* while laboring under the disqualification of being a stranger. — *Hoffman*, p. 211.

**GENTILES.** The name given by the Mormons to all who are not of their faith.

**GENTLEMAN TURKEY.** A turkey cock. The mock modesty of the Western States requires that a male turkey should be so called.

I remember, in my younger days, to have been put in a state of bodily peril by a pugnacious *gentleman turkey* who took umbrage at a flaming red and yellow silk that constituted my apparel. — *Adventures of Capt. Priest*, p. 111.

"This is a tough old fellow," remarked a gentleman on board a Mississippi steamboat who was endeavoring to carve a large turkey.

"Wall, I kind o' think you 're right, stranger," said a Hooshier opposite. "But I reckon it's a *gentleman turkey*." — *Western Sketches*.

**GERRYMANDERING.** Arranging the political divisions of a State so that, in an election, one party may obtain an advantage over its opponent, even though the latter may possess a majority of the votes in the State. This term came into use in the year 1811 in Massachusetts, where, for several years previous, the Federal and Democratic parties stood nearly equal. In that year the Democratic party, having a majority in the legislature, determined so to district the State anew, that those sections which gave a large number of Federal votes might be brought into one district. The result was that the Democratic party carried every thing

before them at the following election, and filled every office in the State, although it appeared by the votes returned that nearly two thirds of the voters were Federalists. Elbridge Gerry, a distinguished politician of that period, was the instigator of this plan, which was called *gerrymandering* after him.

**TO GET RELIGION.** To become pious; a term in common use among certain religious sects.

Stranger, I can't bear to think of the murder of Charley Birkham now; but when I heard it the first time, it was just arter I *got religion*. I could n't help it—I swore jest nigh on to half an hour right straight on eend.—*Frontier Incident*. *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Capt. Underhill killed his neighbor's wife, and *got his religion* on a pipe of tobacco.—*Elliot's New England Hist.* Vol. I p 460.

**TO GET ONE'S BACK UP.** To get excited, become enraged. A figurative expression drawn from the attitude of a cat, which, when angry, raises up her back as well as her hair.

**GET OUT!** A New England expression, equivalent to *let me alone*.

**TO GET ROUND.** To get the better of, take advantage of one.

One from the land of cakes sought to *get round* a right smart Yankee, but couldn't shine.—*Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 89.

**TO GET THE WRONG PIG BY THE TAIL,** is to make a mistake in selecting a person for any object. This is also called *getting the wrong sow by the ear*.

I did not seek the office I have now, and was not at the meeting when I was elected; but the Whigs supposed they could by some means make me a traitor to my party. But, sir, as the old saying is, they *got the wrong pig by the tail*.—*Letter of Mr. C. C. Bell*.

**G'HAL.** A slang term for *girl*, corresponding to *B'hoy*, which see.

If you would see the *B'hoy* in his glory—at the top of his career—in the *ne plus ultra* of his mundane state—you must see him taking a drive with his *g'hal* on the avenue.—*New York in Slices*.

**GILEAD FIR.** See *Balsam Fir*.

**GIMBAL-JAWED or JIMBER-JAWED.** One whose lower jaw is loose and projecting.

**GIN.** (*g* hard.) A contraction for *given*, also used vulgarly for *gave*; as, "He *gin* me a crack side of the head."

**GIN AND TIDY.** Neatly dressed; spruce.

What women happened to be there were very *gin and tidy* in the work of their own hands, which made them look tempting in the eyes of us foresters.—*Westover Papers*, p. 119.

**TO GIRDLE.** In America, to make a circular incision, like a belt, through the bark and alburnum of a tree to kill it.—*Webster*. Settlers in new countries often adopt this method to clear their land; for when the trees are dead they set them on fire, and thus save themselves the trouble of chopping them down with the axe; the place so cleared is thence called a *girdling*.

The emigrants purchase a lot or two of government land, build a log house, fence a dozen acres or so, plough half of them, *girdle* the trees, and then sell out to a new-comer.—*Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I.

**GIRDLING.** A place where the trees are girdled. See the preceding word.

**GIST.** The main point of a question or action; that on which it lies or turns.—*Jamieson*. A word introduced from the language of law into very common use.

**GIVEN NAME.** The Christian name, or name that is *given* to a person, to distinguish it from the *surname*, which is not given, but inherited. Cobbett calls it a Scotticism. It was probably introduced by the Puritans instead of "Saint's name," or "Christian name."

**GIVY.** A term applied to tobacco leaves, in a certain condition of their preparation for market.

**GLADE.** In New England, smooth ice.

**GLADES.** Everglades; tracts of land at the South covered with water and grass. So called in Maryland, where they are divided into wet and dry *glades*.

**TO GLIMPSE.** To get a glimpse of; as, "I barely *glimpsed* him."

**GLUT.** A thick wooden wedge used in splitting blocks.—*Halliwel*. So also in New England.

**TO GO AHEAD.** To go forward, proceed. A seaman's phrase, which has got into very common use.

I was tired out and wanted a day to rest; but, my face being turned towards Washington, I thought I had better *go ahead*.—*Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 101.

We slip on a pair of India rubber boots, genuine and impenetrable, and *go ahead* without fear.—*N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

The specific instructions to conquer and hold California were issued to Commodore Sloat, by Mr. Bancroft, on the 12th of July, 1846. Previous to this, however, he had been officially notified that war existed, and briefly instructed to "*go ahead*."—*Ibid.* June 13.

My dear hearers; the good work shall go on. I will preach in spite of Old Nick; the steam is up and I will *go ahead*. Backed by sound doctrines, I will square off to opposition—shoot folly—take a hug with sin—upset infidelity—lick Satan out of the land, and kidnap his imps.—*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 17.



GO AHEAD. Rapidly advancing, progressive.

In our opinion, which we express, of course, with our wonted and characteristic diffidence, America is a dashing, *go-ahead*, and highly progressive country, giving by her institutions and enormous growth the solution of the greatest political problem in the world. — *The (Philad.) Press*, July 24, 1858.

GO-AHEADATIVENESS. Spirit of process, progressiveness.

The Merchants Magazine justly thinks, that, in the present complication of European difficulties, a favorable opportunity opens for the natural activity and *go-aheadativeness* of our American business men. — *N. York Times*, May 17, 1855.

TO GO BY. To call; to stop at. Used in the Southern States. — *Sherwood's Georgia*. Mr. Pickering says this singular expression is often used at the South. "Will you *go by* and dine with me?" i. e., in passing my house will you stop and dine? "Its origin," observes Mr. Pickering, "is very natural. When a gentleman is about riding a great distance through that country, where there are few great roads and the houses or plantations are often two or three miles from them, a friend living near his route asks him to *go by* his plantation and dine or lodge with him."

TO GO A CRUISE. To take a ride or walk. An expression borrowed from the sea, much used in some of the seaports of New England, and particularly in Nantucket.

GO TO GRASS! Be off! get out!

TO GO FOR. 1. To be in favor of. Thus, "*I go for* peace with Mexico," means I am in favor of peace with Mexico, or, as an Englishman would say, I *am for* peace with Mexico. This vulgar idiom is greatly affected by political and other public speakers, who ought to be the guardians of the purity of the language, instead of its most indefatigable corrupters. In the following extract from a so-called religious paper, the reader of correct taste and feeling will hardly know which to admire most, the sentiment or the language:

Will Mr. Greeley say that he or any other citizen has the right to oppose "the country" — that is, its laws — whenever he or they shall choose to pronounce them "wrong?" We say, *go for* your country — right, as she may be in some things — wrong as she is, perhaps, in others; but whether right or wrong, or right and wrong (which is always nearer the truth in all her proceedings), still, *go for* your country. — *Gospel Banner*.

2. To decide in favor of, is another acceptance in which this phrase is often used, especially in stating for which man or measure any particular section of the country has decided, as, "Ohio has *gone for* Clay," "Louisiana has *gone for* the annexation of Mexico." Or still worse, "Ohio has *gone* Whig," "Louisiana has *gone* Loco-foco."

TO GO IN FOR. To advocate, be in favor of.

We go in for all the postage reduction President Taylor recommends. — *New York Tribune*, Dec. 25, 1849.

**TO GO IT BLIND.** To accede to any object without due consideration.

I know what I am at, and don't *go it blind*. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 18.

**TO GO IT WITH A LOOSENESS,** is to act in an unrestrained, rash, headstrong manner. See *Looseness*. So also "to go it with a *rush*."

**TO GO IT STRONG.** To act vigorously; to advocate energetically; to live freely.

President Polk in his message *goes it strong* for the Sub-Treasury. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The senate has of late years refused to take any part of the book plunder, but they have *gone it strong* on the mileage. — *Letters from Washington, N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

I would have you understand, my dear hearers, that I have no objection to some of the sons and daughters of the earth going it while they are young, provided they don't *go it too strong*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 176.

**TO GO ONE'S DEATH** on a thing, is equivalent to "lay one's life" on it.

**TO GO THE BIG FIGURE.** To do things on a large scale.

Why, our senators *go the big figure* on fried oysters and whiskey punch. — *Burton, Waggeries*.

**TO GO THE WHOLE FIGURE.** To go to the fullest extent in the attainment of any object.

*Go the whole figure* for religious liberty; it has no meanin' here, where all are free, but it's a cant word and sounds well. — *Sam Slick*.

"If you *go the whole figure* on temperance," said Mrs. Mudlaw, in giving her receipt for pudding sauce, "then some other flavorn' must be used instead of brandy or wine." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 377.

Suppose we keep thanksgivin' to home this year, and invite all our whole grist of cousins and aunts and things — *go the whole figure* and do the genteel thing. — *McClintock's Tales*.

**TO GO THE WHOLE HOG.** A Western vulgarism, meaning to do a thing out and out. A softened form of the phrase is *To go the entire animal*.

Of the congressional and State tickets we can only form a conjecture; but the probability is that the Democrats have carried the whole, for they generally *go the whole hog* — they never scratch or split differences. — *Newspaper*.

The phrase has been caught up by some English writers.

The Tiger has leapt up heart and soul,  
It's clear that he means to *go the whole*  
*Hog*, in his hungry efforts to seize  
The two defianceful Bengalesco. — *New Tale of a Tub*.

**TO GO OFF.** To expire.

"O Mr. Crane!" said the Widow Bedott, "I thought I should *go off* last night

when I see that old critter squeeze up and hook on to you. Terrible impudent — warn't it? — *Widow Bedott's Papers*, p. 77.

**TO GO THROUGH THE MILL.** To acquire experience, and especially to meet with difficulties, losses, etc. The metaphor is derived from grain which has undergone the process of grinding.

The now common phrase, "To see the elephant," conveys the same meaning.

**TO GO UNDER.** To perish. An expression adopted from the figurative language of the Indians by the Western trappers and residents of the prairies.

Thar was old Sam Owins — him as got rubbed out by the Spaniards at Sacramento or Chihuahua, this hoss doesn't know which, but he *went under* any how. — *Ruxton, Life in the Fur West*, p. 14.

Being entirely naked, there was no sign left by dropping garments to betray him; besides, the blood upon the water had proved his friend. On seeing that, the hunters were under the full belief that he had "*gone under*," and therefore took but little pains to search further — *Capt. Mayne Reid, Osceola*, p. 192.

**GOBBLER.** A male turkey; a turkey-cock.

It was a nice weddin'; sich raisins and oranges and hams, flour doins and chicken fixins, and four sich uncommon big *gobblers* roasted, I never seed. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**GOING.** Travelling; as, "The *going* is bad, owing to the deep snow in the roads."

**GOLLY!** Used euphemistically for "God!" chiefly by negroes in swearing.

I went down to the spring branch one morning to wash. I looked into the water, and I seen the shadow of my face. Great *Golly!* how I run back, hollerin' for mammy every jump — *Widow Bagley's Husband*.

**GOMBO, or GUMBO.** 1. The Southern name for what is called, at the North, Okra, the pod of the *Hibiscus esculentus*.

2. In the southern States, a soup in which this plant enters largely as an ingredient.

**GONDOLA.** A flat-bottomed boat or scow used in New England. — *Pickering*.

In Pennsylvania and Maryland this word is spelled as well as pronounced *gundalo* or *gundelow*. Comp. *cupalo*.

**GONE COON.** "He's a *gone coon*" is a Western phrase, meaning that a man is past recovery, that his case is hopeless.

Bill was never one minit unwatched, awake or asleep; he was n't allowed to speak, although he was fed and not abused, and he'd pretty much made up his mind that he was a *gone coon*. — *Spirit of the Times*.

**GONE GOOSE.** "It's a *gone goose* with him," means that he is lost, is past recovery. The phrase is a vulgarism in New England. In New York it is said, "He's a *gone gander*," i. e. a lost man; and in the West, "He's a *gone coon*."

If a bear comes after you, Sam, you must be up and doin', or it's a *gone goose* with you. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 18.

It may be the doctor can do something for her, though she looks to me as though it was a *gone goose* with her. — *Major Downing*, p. 87.

I've generally noticed if a man begins to gape in church at seventhly and eighthly in the sermon, it's a *gone goose* with him before he gets through the tently; from that up he's as dead as a door nail. — *Seba Smith, Yankee Life*.

The poor greenhorn who falls into the clutches of the sharpers upon arriving in the metropolis may regard himself as a *gone gosling* — *New York Paper*.

**GONENESS.** A peculiar sensation of weakness, or of great depression. A woman's word.

**GONER.** "He's a *goner*," means he is lost, is past recovery, is utterly demolished, "used up;" synonymous with *gone goose*, *gone coon*, etc. So in the West, a bad debt is called a *goner*. A Western sportsman in pursuit of a deer, exclaims:

Aha! my fine boy! you are our meat! Put in your biggest licks; for you are a *goner*, now, for sartiu! — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

**GONE WITH**, for *become of*. "What is *gone with* it or him," for What has become of it or him? — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**GONEY or GONY.** A great goose, a stupid fellow. New England. Provincial in Gloucestershire, England.

"How the *goney* swallowed it all, did n't he?" said Mr. Slick, with great glee. — *Slick in England*, ch. 21.

Some on 'em were fools enough to believe the *goney*; that's a fact — *Ibid*.

Formerly, they poked sap-headed *goneys* into parliament, to play dummy; or into the army and navy, the church, and the colonial office. But clever fellows they kept for the law, the "Times," etc — *Nature and Human Nature*, p. 142.

**GONUS.** A stupid fellow. A student's modification of *goney*, used in some of our colleges, according to Mr. Hall.

One day I heard a Senior call a fellow a *gonus*. "*Gonus*," echoed I, "what does that mean?" "Oh," said he, "you're a Freshman, and don't understand. A stupid fellow, a dolt, a boot-jack, an ignoramus, is here called a *gonus*." "All Freshmen," he continued gravely, "are *gonuses*." — *The Dartmouth*, Vol. IV. p. 116.

**GOOD.** English travellers have repeatedly noticed the adverbial use of this word. "He cannot read *good*." "It does not shoot *good*." The expression, "it is no *good*," meaning it is worthless, though condemned

by many, may perhaps be justified by the analogous phrase, "it's no use."

**GOOD AS WHEAT.** A phrase sometimes used instead of the more general one, "good as gold."

**CHECK-MATED.** — It is stated that the father of a lady in this vicinity recently presented her with a check — "*good as wheat*" — for \$30,000, in view of her matrimonial alliance. Truly, such a *check*-ered life as that would n't be hard to lead. We wish somebody would endeavor to "check" our career in that way. — *New Bedford Standard*, Aug. 1858.

**GOODIES.** Sweetmeats, cakes, etc.; as, a box of *goodies*. Provincial in Suffolk, England.

Arter a while the kissin' an foolin' was all over, an we pitched into the *goodies*; an ef ever I saw sweetnins fly, it was then. — *How Sal and Me got Married*.

**GOODS.** This word is used by Western shopkeepers as a singular noun for a piece of goods; as, "that *goods*," speaking of cloth or linen.

**GOOSE.** "To be *sound on the goose*," or "*all right on the goose*," is a South-western phrase, meaning to be orthodox on the slavery question, i. e. pro-slavery. Although it only got into general use during the recent Kansas troubles, I am not able to give its origin.

The border ruffians held a secret meeting in Leavenworth, and appointed themselves a vigilance committee. All persons who could not answer "*all right on the goose*," according to their definition of right, were searched, kept under guard, and threatened with death. — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 252.

A poetical writer in the Providence Journal, in speaking of the claims of a candidate for the office of mayor, says:

To seek for political flaws is no use,  
His opponents will find he is "*sound on the goose*." — June 18, 1857.

**GOOSE-FISH.** See *Devil-Fish*.

**TO GOOSE BOOTS.** To repair them by putting on a new front half way up, and a new bottom.

**GOPHER.** 1. In Georgia, a species of land turtle, burrowing in the ground in the low country. It is able to walk with a heavy man on its back. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

2. A little animal found in the valleys of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. A species of mole, more than twice the size of the common field mole. It burrows in the prairies, and there are immense tracts covered with the little hillocks made by the earth which they have dug from their burrows. — *Flint's Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

The *gopher* often burrows in the artificial tumuli, to find a dry place for its nest; and roots of trees penetrate to their lowest depths. — *Lapham's Antiq. of Wisconsin*, p. 48.

Mr. Bryant, in alluding to the same fact, says :

The *gopher* mines the ground  
Where stood the swarming cities. All is gone;  
All save the piles of earth that hold their bones.

GOSH. Used in the euphemistic form of oath, *by Gosh!*

GOSPEL LOT. A lot set apart in new townships for a church, on the same principle as a school lot. New York.

GOTHAM. The city of New York, an appellation first given to it in "Salmagundi," evidently from the singular wisdom attributed to its inhabitants.

Ye dandies of *Gotham*; I've seen fools and fops in forty different cities, but none to compare with you. — *Dow's Sermons*.

GOTHAMITES. The people of the city of New York; the New Yorkers.

I intended to present you with some phases of outward life and manners, — such things as would strike or interest a stranger in our beloved Gotham, and in the places to which regular *Gothamites* — American cockneys, so to speak — are wont to repair. — *Sketches of American Society, Frazer's Magazine*.

GOUGE. A cheat, fraud, robbery.

R — and II — will probably receive from Mr. Polk's administration \$100,000 more than respectable printers would have done the work for. There is a clean plain *gouge* of this sum out of the people's strong box. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 10, 1845.

If the people of Mr I —'s district see fit to indorse and justify his enormous *gouge*, and his more profligate defence of it, they virtually make it their own. — *New York Herald*.

TO GOUGE. 1. To chouse; to cheat.

Very well, gentlemen! *gouge* Mr. Crosby out of the seat, if you think it wholesome to do it. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1845.

2. "*Gouging* is performed by twisting the forefinger in a lock of hair, near the temple, and turning the eye out of the socket with the thumb-nail, which is suffered to grow long for that purpose." — *Lambert's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 300.

This practice is only known by hearsay at the North and East, and appears to have existed at no time except among the lower class of people in the interior of some of the Southern States. An instance has not been heard of for years. Grose has the word in his Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue, and defines it as "a cruel custom, practised by the Bostonians in America!"

Mr. Weld found this custom prevailing in Virginia in 1796. In speaking of his visit to Richmond, he says :

Whenever these people come to blows, they fight like wild beasts, biting, kicking,

and endeavoring to tear out each other's eyes with their nails. It is by no means uncommon to meet with those who have lost an eye in combat, and there are men who pride themselves upon the dexterity with which they can scoop one out. This they call *gouging* — *Travels in North America*, p. 143.

“Gouge him, B—t! darn ye, gouge him;  
Gouge him while he's on the shore!”  
And his thumbs were straightway buried  
Where no thumbs had pierced before.

*Bon Gaultier, Ballads.*

A man who was paying his addresses to a Western belle, found one day another suitor, of whom he thus speaks:

I got a side squint into one of his pockets, and saw it was full of eyes that had been *gouged* from people of my acquaintance. I knew my jig was up, for such a feller could out-court me, and I thought the gall brought me on purpose to have a fight. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. I.

**GOVERNMENTAL.** Relating to government. A modern word, sometimes used, and yet censured, both in England and America, and characterized by the *Eclectic Review* as an “execrable barbarism.” — *Worcester*.

**GRAB GAME.** A mode of swindling, or rather stealing, practised by sharpers in our large cities. Bets are made in which considerable sums of money are involved, when a dispute is purposely planned, in the midst of which one of the confederates seizes or “grabs” the money at stake and runs off. The term is also used in a more general sense to signify stealing, and making off with the booty, as in the following example:

“The fact is,” replied Bob, “this country is getting rather too hot for me, and I’ll bear you company! What d’ye say to that?”

“Just as you like,” responded his two companions; “that is, provided you won’t attempt the *grab game* on us.” — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 282.

**GRADE.** (French.) 1. A degree or rank in order or dignity, civil, military, or ecclesiastical.

2. A step or degree in any ascending series; as, “crimes of every *grade*.” — *Webster*.

This word is of comparatively modern use. It is not in the English dictionaries previous to Todd’s edition of Johnson in 1818. Mr. Todd calls it “a word brought forward in some modern pamphlets,” and says, “it will hardly be adopted.” Mr. Richardson says the word “has crept into frequent use.” Mr. Knowles, in the ninth edition of his dictionary, introduces the word as once belonging to the language, without comment. The *British Critic* and other reviews have criticized the word as an unauthorized Americanism; but, as we have seen, it has been adopted at last by the English themselves.

While questions, periods, and *grades* and privileges are never once formally discussed. — *S. Miller*.

To talents of the highest *grade* he [Hamilton] united a patient industry not always the companion of genius. — *Marshall's Life of Washington*, Vol. V p. 213.

3. The amount of inclination on a road.

TO GRADE. To reduce to a certain degree of ascent or descent, as a road or way. — *Webster*.

TO GRAFT. To "*graft boots*" is to repair them by adding new soles, and surrounding the feet with new leather. So called in Connecticut. Elsewhere called "*foxing boots*."

GRAHAM BREAD. Bread made of unbolted wheat. It is easier to digest than common wheaten bread, and is, in consequence, much used by invalids.

GRAHAMITES. People who follow the system of Graham in their regimen.

A glance at his round, ruddy face would shame a *Grahamite* or teetotaller out of his abstinence principles. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 130.

GRAHAM SYSTEM. A system of dietetics recommended by Sylvester Graham, a lecturer of some celebrity on temperance and dietetics, which excludes the use of all animal food and stimulating drinks, including tea, coffee, etc.

GRAIN. 1. A particle; a bit; a little. Ex. "I don't care a *grain*;" "Push the candle a *grain* further from you."

2. The universal name, in the United States, for what is called *corn* in England; that is, wheat, rye, oats, barley, etc. See *Bread-Stuff*.

GRAMA GRASS. (*Chondrosium*.) Several species of this grass are found on our Western borders, where it is esteemed excellent food for cattle.

GRAND. Very good, excellent, pleasant. This is one of the words so much abused among us by its too frequent use and application in senses differing from its proper one. Ex. "This is a *grand* day;" "the sleighing is *grand*;" "what a *grand* time we had at the ball;" "*grand* weather," etc. Mr. Hamilton, in his remarks on the Yorkshire dialect in England (*Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 318), notices this word as common there in the same sense.

GRANDACIOUS. Magnificent. A factitious word.

GRANDIFEROUS. Magnificent, extensive. A factitious word.

GRANITE STATE. The State of New Hampshire, so called from the abundance of this material found in it.

TO GRANT, for to vouchsafe, is used in prayer; as, "*grant* to hear us." Southern.



GRAPE FRUIT. A variety of *Citrus racemosus*. Barbadoes.

GRAPE VINE. See *Blue Grass*.

GRASS. A vulgar contraction of *sparrow-grass*, i. e. asparagus. Further than this the force of corruption can hardly go.

GRASSET. See *Chewink*.

GRASS WIDOW. A wife who has been separated from her husband; called also a "widow bewitched." In England the term *grass widow* signifies an unmarried woman who has had a child.

GRAVE-YARD. Mrs. Trollope italicizes this word as novel to her English ears, accustomed to "*church-yard*."

GRAVY. Used in New England instead of *juice*; as the *gravy* of an apple-pie.

GREASE WOOD. (*Obione canescens*.) The chamizo of the Mexicans.

TO GREASE THE WHEELS is a metaphorical expression used in the West to signify paying occasionally a little money to your creditor, grocer, etc.

GREASER. A term vulgarly applied to the Mexicans and other Spanish Americans. It first became common during the war with Mexico.

The Americans call the Mexicans *greasers*, which is scarcely a complimentary soubriquet; although the term "*greaser camp*" as applied to a Mexican encampment is truthfully suggestive of filth and squalor. — *Marryat, Mountains and Molehills*, p. 236.

Tell the old coon then to quit that, and make them darned *greasers* clear out of the lodge, and pock some corn and shucks here for the animals, for they're nigh give out. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 176.

GREAT. Distinguished, excellent, admirable. Thus, "a *great* Christian" means a pious man; "a *great* horse," a horse of good qualities and bottom; "a *great* plantation," a fertile one. So, too, "he is *great* at running;" "she is *great* on the piano."

GREAT BIG. Very large; as, "I've got a *great big* water-melon." Often used by children.

GREATLE. A great while. Long Island.

GREEK. A soubriquet often applied to Irishmen, in jocular allusion to their soi-disant *Milesian* origin.

In some of our Atlantic cities the men of foreign birth, especially those in vulgar style called *Greeks*, constitute so nearly a majority, that it is only their ignorance that prevents the saying of Maro from being fulfilled, —

. . . . . *Danai dominantur in urbe.*

As it is, demagogues rule through them. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 2, 1858.

**GREEN.** Uncouth, raw, inexperienced, applied to persons; a metaphor derived from the vegetable world. It answers to the English use of the word *verdant*.

A Pennsylvania editor says:

Somebody brought one bottle of sour water into our office, with the request to notice it as "lemon beer." If Esau was *green* enough to sell his birthright for a mess of pottage, it does not prove that we will tell a four-shilling lie for five cents.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN STATE.** The State of Vermont.

**GRIFFIN, GRIFFE.** This word, like the French *griffone*, is constantly used in Louisiana, both in conversation and in print, for a mulatto, particularly the woman; probably in allusion to the fabulous griffin, half eagle, half lion.

**TO GRIG.** To vex, irritate. *To grig* means to pinch, in Somerset, England.

That word "superiors" *grigged* me. Thinks I, "My boy, I'll just take that expression, roll it up in a ball, and shy it back at you." — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 83.

**GRIST.** A large number or quantity.

There's an unaccountable *grist* of bees, I can tell you; and if you mean to charge upon such enemies, you must look out for somebody besides Whiskey Centre for your vanguard — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

I went down to the Squire's to have a talk with his daughter. There was a whole *grist* of fellows there. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I says, says I, "Hannah, sposin we keep thanksgiving to home this year," says I, "and invite all our hull *grist* o' cousins and aunts and things—go the whole figure, and do the thung genteel." — *McClintock's Tales*.

**GRIT.** Hard sandstone, employed for millstones, grindstones, pavement, etc. And hence the word is often vulgarly used to mean courage, spirit.

The command of a battalion was given to Mr. Jones, a pretty decided Whig in politics, and, like many other men of Zaccanean stature, all *grit* and spirit. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*, June 24.

Honor and fame from no condition rise. It's the *grit* of a fellow that makes the man — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 44.

If he had n't a had the clear *grit* in him, and showed his teeth and claws, they'd a nullified him so you would n't see a grease spot of him no more. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 17.

The Hunters grew into a class in New England. They were a breed by themselves, a kind of cross between the Puritan and Indian, with all the *grit* of the one and lawless love of liberty of the other. — *Elliott, New England History*, Vol. I. p. 459.

I reckon the chaplain was the real *grit* for a parson, — always doin' as he'd be

done by, and practisin' a darn'd sight more than he preached. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. I.

GRITTY. Courageous; spirited.

My decided opinion is, that there never was a *grittier* crowd congregated on that stream; and such dancin' and drinkin', and eatin' bar steaks and corn dodgers, and huggin' the gals, don't happen but once in a fellow's lifetime. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 106.

GROCERY. A grocer's shop. In the plural, the commodities sold by grocers.

In the South-west, a *grocery* is a bar-room, and the term *groceries* means liquors. The barkeeper is often told to "fetch on his *groceries*."

The "*grocery*" — consisting of a whiskey barrel, six tin cups, two green glass tumblers, a lot of pipes and tobacco — was in close proximity to the inn I was in; and there the qualities of a very recent extraction of the corn, and of the fitness of the candidates to receive the votes of the corned, was discussed in the manner usual in such times and places. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Every other house in Santa Fé was a *grocery*, as they call a gin and whiskey shop, continually disgorging reeling, drunken men, and everywhere filth and dirt triumphant. — *Ruxton, Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 190.

GROGGERY. A place where spirituous liquors are sold and drank; a grog-shop. In the West, often called a Doggery or Dog-hole, and in New York a Rum-hole.

GROUND BRIDGE. The well-known corduroy road of the South, laid on the bed of a creek or other body of water, to render it fordable; while the hollow bridge is one that is thrown over the water.

GROUND CHERRY. (*Physalis*.) A wild fruit lately introduced into our gardens and markets. Sometimes called Winter Cherry.

GROUND HOG. See *Woodchuck*.

GROUND NUT. (*Arachis hypogæa*.) The pea nut. It buries its pods under ground after flowering, to ripen its nuts. It is cultivated in the West Indies and Southern States.

GROUND PLUM. (*Astragalus caryocarpus*.) A plant growing on dry soil on the Mississippi River at the junction of the St. Peter's, and westward and southward. The fruit, which is a pod, closely resembles a plum, whence its name.

GROUND SQUIRREL. A name sometimes erroneously given to the striped and spotted prairie squirrel (*Spermophilus tredecimlineatus*).

GROUNDS. "Tobacco grounds," "low grounds," "corn grounds," are terms applied to lands in Virginia. They never use the term "bottoms" or "bottom lands," which they call "low grounds."

**GROUTY.** Cross, ill-natured. Northern.

**GRUBBY.** See *Toad-Fish*.

**GRUNTER.** (Genus, *Pogonias*. Cuvier.) One of the popular names of the fish called by naturalists the Banded Drum. It is common to the Atlantic coast south of New York. Grunts and Young Sheepskin are other names of the same fish. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**GUANO.** (Quichua, *huanu*, the dung of birds.) A compound of the excrements of sea-birds, and the remains of penguins and other water-fowls. According to Garcillasso de la Vega, it was extensively used by the ancient Peruvians to manure their lands, for which purpose it is now imported in large quantities to the United States and Europe.

The earliest mention of *guano* as a manure is found in Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, first printed in Seville in 1590. In an English translation by E. G. (supposed to have been Edward Grimestone), published in 1604, is the following at p. 311 :

In some islands or phares, which are joyning to the coast of Peru, wee see the toppes of the mountaines all white, and to sight you would take it for snow, or for some white land ; but they are heaps of dung of sea fowle, which go continually thither. . . . They go with boates to these ilands, onely for the dung ; for there is no other profit in them. And this dung is so commodious and profitable, as it makes the earth yeeelde great aboundance of fruite. They call this dung *guano*, whereof the valley hath taken the name, which they call *Lamaguana*, in the valleys of Peru, where they use this dung, and it is the most fertile of all that countrie . . . So as these birds have not only the flesh to serve for meate, their singing for recreation, their feathers for ornament and beautie, but alsoe their dung serves to fatten the ground.

**GUARDEEN**, strongly accented on the last syllable, is often heard in New England for *guardian*.

**GUAYA.** (W. Ind. *guayaba*.) The fruit of the *Psidium pomiferum* of the West Indies, from which a jelly is made. — *Worcester*. The Spanish name *guava* is applied to a different fruit.

**GUBERNATORIAL.** Pertaining to government or to a governor. — *Webster*.

**TO GUESS.** 1. To conjecture ; to judge without any certain principles of judgment.

2. To conjecture rightly, or upon some just reason. — *Johnson*.

Yelothed was she, fresh for to devise ;

Her yellow hair was braided in a tress

Behind her back, a yard long I *guess*. — *Chaucer's Heroine*.

Incapable and shallow innocents !

You cannot *guess* who caused your father's death. — *Shakspeare*.

One may *guess* by Plato's writings, that his meaning as to the inferior deities was, that they who would have them might, and they who would not might let them alone; but that himself had a right opinion concerning the true God.—*Stillingfleet*.

We thus see that the legitimate, English sense of this word is to *conjecture*; but with us, and especially in New England, it is constantly used in common conversation instead of *to believe, to suppose, to think, to imagine, to fancy*. It is even used to make an emphatic assertion; as, "Jem, would'n't you like a julep to cool you off this sultry morning?" "I *guess* I would!" From such examples as the words *to fix* and *to guess*, it will be seen that, while on the one hand we have a passion for coining new and unnecessary words and often in a manner opposed to the analogies of the language, there is on the other hand a tendency to banish from common use a number of the most useful and classical English expressions, by forcing one word to do duty for a host of others of somewhat similar meaning. This latter practice is by far the more dangerous of the two; because, if not checked and guarded against in time, it will corrode the very texture and substance of the language, and rob posterity of the power of appreciating and enjoying those masterpieces of literature bequeathed to us by our forefathers, which form the richest inheritance of all that speak the English tongue.

An amusing illustration of the manner in which such misuse of words can obscure the sense of their true meaning, even in the minds of educated men, is furnished by a critical comment in the "Shakespear's Scholar" of Richard Grant White, A. M., on the following passage in Richard III. Act IV. Scene IV.:

STANLEY. Richmond is on the seas.

K. RICHARD. There let him sink—and be the seas on him.  
White-livered runagate;—what doth he there?

STANLEY. I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess.

K. RICHARD. Well, as you guess?

A better illustration of the correct use of the word could nowhere be found. Stanley says he does not know, he only *guesses*; and the king replies, Well, tell me what your *guess* or suspicion is. But hear the American critic. "If there be two words for the use of which, more than any others, our English cousins twit us, they are '*well*,' as an interrogative exclamation, and '*guess*.' Milton uses both, as Shakespear also frequently does, and exactly in the way in which they are used in America; and here we have them both in half a line. Like most of those words and phrases which it pleases John Bull to call Americanisms, they are English of the purest and best, which have lived here while they have died out in the mother country." To such "*English of the purest and best!*" are we fast hastening, if some check is not put on the present tendencies of our colloquial speech, and the style adopted in our periodical literature.—*Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

GUINEA CORN, (*Holcus sorghum*.) Egyptian millet, Durrah of the Arabs,

a plant with a stalk of the size and appearance of maize. The grain grows in a single pendant bunch at the top.

GUINEA GRASS. A species of grass cultivated in the West Indies, used as fodder for horses. — *Carmichael's W. Indies.*

GUINEA-KEET, or simply KEET. A name given in some localities to the Guinea fowl, and probably derived from its cry.

GULCH. A deep ravine, caused by the action of water. California.

The word *gulch*, which is in general use here, may not be familiar to your ears; though its sound somewhat expresses its meaning, without further definition. It denotes a mountain ravine, differing from ravines elsewhere, as the mountains of California differ from all others, more steep, abrupt, and inaccessible. The sound of *gulch* is like that of a sudden plunge into a deep hole, which is just the character of the thing itself. It bears the same relation to a ravine, that a cañon does to a pass or gorge — *Bayard Taylor's Letters from California*, Sept. 1849.

TO GULCH. To swallow voraciously. — *Todd, Webster.* In low language this word is still heard in New England.

You are all a haggling, *gulching*, good-for-nothing crew — *Margaret.*

GULF STATES. The States bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, namely, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

TO GULLY. To wear a hollow channel in the earth. — *Webster.* This conversion of the noun into a verb is an Americanism. "The roads are much *gullied*," is a common expression.

GULLY PLUM. The fruit of the *Spondia lutea*. So called in Barbadoes.

GUM. 1. The name of many Southern trees. The Sour Gum and Black Gum are species of *Nyssa*. The Sweet Gum, often called simply Gum or Gum-tree, is *Liquidambar styraciflua*. The trees of this last species resemble the Hornbeam of the north. They grow to a large size, and, in many instances, decay at the heart, leaving a shell of some few inches in thickness. Hence they are frequently cut into convenient lengths, and, after due preparation, converted into casks, bee-hives, etc. From this practice, bee-hives, though made of boards, have come to be called *bee-gums*, and any thing like casks or firkins for domestic uses is called a *gum*. Southern.

What dat? What dat dis nigger's eyes

Dispose, what mighty big surprise,

Upon de *gum-tree* swingin'?

It am de possum at his ease,

Rocked in de cradle ob de breeze,

And list'nin' to de singin'. — *Negro Melody.*

2. India-rubber. Hence the plural *Gums* is often applied to India-rubber shoes.

**GUM GAME.** A trick, a dodge. Opossums and raccoons, when pursued, will fly for refuge to the Sweet Gum tree, in preference to any other. This tree is very tall, slim, smooth, and void of branches except a tuft at the top, which is a place of security for any animal expert enough to reach it. As they are hunted in the night, they are, of course, beyond the reach of the hunter's penetrating eye at the great height of the gum tree. This is called "coming the *gum game*" over the hunter.

**TO GUM A SAW.** To punch out and give the set to the teeth of a saw, by means of a machine called a *gummer*. The phrase alludes to the growth of the teeth from the gums.

**GUMBO.** See *Gombo*.

**GUMMER.** A machine for gumming saws.

**GUMMY!** An exclamation, used in New England.

"*Gummy!*" retorted the woman. "He has been a talkin' about me, and a runnin' me down." — *Margaret*, p. 137.

**GUMP.** A foolish person; a dolt. — *Webster*. It is provincial in England, and may be found in most of the glossaries.

Him Crane is the conarndest old *gump* that ever was — no intellectibility at all. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 90.

**GUMPTION.** Understanding; skill. — *Todd*. This vulgar word is provincial in most parts of England, and is noticed in the glossaries of Pegge, Brockett, Forby, Jennings, and Halliwell. With us it is frequently heard.

What tho' young empty airy sparks  
May have their critical remarks; —

'Tis sma' presumption,  
To say they're but unlearned clarks,  
And want the *gumption*. — *Hamilton, Ramsay's Poems*, II.

He's a clever man, and aint wantin' in *gumption*. He's no fool, that's a fact. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 26.

**GUN STICK.** A ramrod. Western.

**GUNNING.** A colloquial word, from *gun*. The act of going out with a gun, in order to shoot game. — *Ash's Dictionary*. This word is commonly used by sportsmen in the Northern States in the sense given by Ash. At the South the word *hunting* is used.

The Americans were, however, mostly marksmen, having been accustomed to *gunning* from their youth. — *Hannah Adams, Hist. of N. England*.

**GURRY.** The slime and blood of fish. A fisherman's word.

The fisherman dips a bucket of fresh water from the spring, and, washing the *gurry* from his hands and face, starts for home. — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman.*

**GUSH.** A great abundance. A Texan would say, "We have got a *gush* of peaches in our neck of the woods."

**GUT.** A tidal inlet or narrow strait. Used also in England.

## H.

**HABITAN.** (French.) A term applied to what, in English, is called a yeoman; i. e. a small country proprietor. Canada and Louisiana.

My coachman was a *habitan*, and I had a fine opportunity of studying the conflicting traits of character which distinguish the race. — *Lanman's Tour to the Saguenay.*

At Lake Megantic, Gen. Arnold met an emissary whom he had sent in advance to ascertain the feelings of the *habitans*, or French yeomanry. — *Irving's Life of Washington*, Vol. II. p. 96.

**HACKBERRY.** (*Celtis occidentalis*.) A small or middle-sized tree, with sweet and edible fruits as large as bird-cherries, and which makes good firewood. It is also called Sugar Berry.

**HACKEE.** A name given, in some of the Eastern States, to the Chipmuk.

**HACKMATACK.** The American larch, or Tamarack (*Larix Americana*). This tree abounds in the North-eastern States and British America. It is a hard, strong, and durable wood, is frequently used in ship-building, while the houses of the settlers are almost entirely constructed of it. The name is probably of Indian origin.

**HAD HAVE.** This astonishing combination of auxiliaries is often used by speakers and writers who should know better.

*Had we have known this.* — *Nott, on Hamilton's Duel.*

**HAD N'T OUGHTER**, i. e. had not ought to, for "ought not to," a common vulgarism in New England. See *Ought*.

**TO HAIL FROM.** A phrase probably originating with seamen or boatmen, and meaning to come from, to belong to; as, "He *hails* from Kentucky," i. e. he is a native of Kentucky, or lives in Kentucky.

**HAIN'T**, for *have not*. A contraction much used in common conversation in New England. It is also used in various parts of England.

**HAKE.** The New Jersey name for the King-Fish.



**HALF COCK.** "To go off at *half cock*" is a metaphorical expression borrowed from the language of sportsmen, and is applied to a person who attempts a thing in a hurry without due preparation, and consequently fails.

Mr. Clayton of Georgia is a fine speaker; he is always ready, and never goes off *half cock*. — *Crockett, Tour down East*.

**HALF-FACED CAMP.** A shelter of the frontiersmen of the South of the last generation, and perhaps of the present. They are sometimes open on the south side, whence the name.

You may talk about your reunions, your soirées, and all that the world calls social refinement; but for true-hearted benevolence, void of parade, commend me to a hunting-party in a *half-faced camp* — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 95.

**HALF-MADE.** Half-witted. Provincial in Herefordshire, England, and in New England.

**HAMMOCK.** (Carib, *amaca*.) A swinging-bed. This word, now in such general use, especially among seamen, and the etymology of which has been so much disputed, is undoubtedly of West Indian origin.

Cotton for the making of *hamacas*, which are Indian beds. — *Raleigh, Disc. of Guiana*, 1596.

The Brazilians call their beds *hamacas*; they are a sheet laced at both ends, and so they sit rocking themselves in them. — *Sir R. Hawkins, Voy. to South Sea*.

**HAND.** An adept or proficient in any thing; one who is fond of any thing.

It is a wonder to me how some folks can content themselves doin' nothin'; I never could. I must be doin' something, or I should gape myself to death. I'm a great *hand* to gape — why afore now I've gaped so much on Sundays that my mouth would n't stay shut for a week after. — *Yankee Hill's Stories*.

"Take a pickle, Mr. Crane," said the Widow Bedott, "I'm glad you like pickles — they're a delightful beverage. Melissa never eats 'em — she ain't no pickle *hand*." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 71.

**HAND RUNNING.** Consecutively; as, "He can hit the bull's eye at fifty paces ten times *hand running*." So too in the North of England.

**TO HANDLE.** To manage, to overcome an opponent; particularly in wrestling. Ex. "You can't *handle* him."

**HANDSOMELY.** Carefully, steadily. A term used by seamen when giving an order.

**HANDWRITE,** for *handwriting*, a common barbarism at the South; as, "I can't read his *handwrite*."

**HANG.** "To get the *hang* of a thing" is to get the knack, or habitual

facility, of doing it well ; also, to get acquainted with. A low expression frequently heard among us.

If ever you must have an indifferent teacher for your children, let it be after they have got a fair start and have acquired the *hang* of the tools for themselves.—*Prime, Hist. of Long Island*, p. 82.

He had been in pursuit of the science of money-making all his life, but could never get the *hang* of it.—*Pickings from the Picayune*.

Suggs lost his money and his horse, but then he had n't got the *hang* of the game.—*Simon Suggs*, p. 44.

Well, now, I can tell you that the sheriffs are the easiest men for you to get the *hang* of, among all the public officers.—*Greene on Gambling*.

TO HANG. To stick fast, come to a stand still ; as, the jury *hung*, and "the man got a new trial." Probably borrowed from the sportsman's term "to *hung* fire," said of a gun which does not go off at once.

TO HANG AROUND. To loiter about. The English expression is to *hang about*.

Every time I come up from Louisiana, I found Jess *hangin' round* that gal, lookin' awful sweet, and a fellow could n't go near her without raisin' his dander.—*Robb, Squatter Life*.

TO HANG UP ONE'S FIDDLE. To desist ; to give up.

When a man loses his temper and ain't cool, he might as well *hang up his fiddle*.—*Sam Slick*.

If a man at forty-two is not in a fair way to get his share of the world's spoils, he might as well *hang up his fiddle*, and be content to dig his way through life as best he may.—*Dow's Sermons*, p. 78.

TO HAPPEN IN. To happen to call in ; to go or come in accidentally.

*Happening into* the Suffolk jail on a business errand, we were somewhat startled by hearing our name familiarly called from a prisoner's cell, etc.—*Boston Bee*, Feb. 1855.

TO HAPPIFY. To make happy. This mongrel barbarism, according to Mr. Pickering, is sometimes heard in our pulpits.

HAPPY AS A CLAM is a common simile in New England, sometimes enlarged to "happy as a clam at high-water."

Inglorious friend ! most confident I am

Thy life is one of very little ease ;

Albeit men mock thee with their smiles,

And prate of being *happy as a clam*.—*Saxe, Sonnet to a Clam*.

The poor peasant who satisfies his hunger with submission and salt pork, penitence and potatoes, is as sound as a live oak corporeally, and as *happy as a clam* at high-water.—*Dow's Sermons*.

HARD CASE. A worthless, dissipated fellow ; a drunkard.

**HARD COAL.** Anthracite coal, so called to distinguish it from bituminous coal, which is called *soft coal*.

Since the introduction of *hard coal*, the infernal regions have become greatly enlarged, so that they can now uncomfortably accommodate the whole human race, whither they all appear to be bound, for a certainty. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 112.

**HARDHACK.** (*Spiræa tomentosa*.) The popular name of a well-known and common plant in pastures and low grounds. It is celebrated for its astringent properties.

She made a nosegay of the mountain laurel, red cedar with blueberries, and a bunch of the white *hardhack*. — *Margaret*, p. 206.

**HARDHEAD.** A fish of the herring species, the menhaden; so called in the State of Maine. See *Menhaden*.

**HARD PUSHED.** Hard pressed, in a difficulty; and especially, as a mercantile phrase, hard pressed for money, short of cash.

As I said, at the end of six months we began to be *hard pushed*. Our credit, however, was still fair. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 123.

**A HARD ROW TO HOE.** A metaphor derived from hoeing corn, meaning a difficult matter or job to accomplish.

Gentlemen, I never opposed Andrew Jackson for the sake of popularity. I knew it was a *hard row to hoe*; but I stood up to the rack, considering it a duty I owed to the country that governed me. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour down East*, p. 69.

**HARD RUN.** To be hard pressed; and especially to be in want of money. The same as *hard pushed*.

We knew the Tammany party were *hard run*; but we did not know it was reduced to the necessity of stealing the principles of Nativism. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1845.

**HARD UP.** In straits for want of money; short of funds.

**HARDSHELL BAPTISTS.** The name of a sect of Baptists in the Southern States, known as those of the strait-laced order; while those of liberal views are called "Softshell Baptists."

We had a variety of passengers in the stage to Milledgeville. There was an old gentleman in black, a dandy gambler, an old *Hardshell preacher*, as they call them in Georgia, with the biggest mouth I ever seed, a circus clown, a cross old maid, a beautiful young lady, etc. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

In a debate in the House of Representatives, in 1857, Mr. Elliott, of Kentucky, in nominating the Rev. John Morris for chaplain, said:

Mr. Morris is a regular member of the *Hardshell Baptist Church*, a very pious man, not of very eminent ability, but just the man to pray for such a crowd as this.

**HARDSHELL DEMOCRATS**, also called "**HARDSHELLS**," and again abbreviated into "**HARDS**." The name of a political party, of which the following history is given by the New York Tribune of April 2, 1853:

These terms date from the efforts made to reunite the Cass and Van Buren democracy of 1848, who were known as Hunkers and Barnburners. Some difficulty attended this reunion, which gave rise to the use of the new political epithets. The difference between a *Hardshell* and a *Softshell* is this: one favors the execution of the Fugitive Slave Law and goes for a distribution of the offices among the Nationals, while the other is a loud stickler for Union and Harmony. The *Hards* embrace the Cass Hunkers of 1848, of the National school of politics; while the *Softs* are composed of the remnants of the Van Buren and Adams party of 1848, and such Hunkers as Secretary Marcy and Governor Seymour.

**HARD WOOD**. A term applied to woods of solid texture that soon decay, including generally, beech, birch, maple, ash, etc. Used by shipwrights and farmers in Maine, in opposition to oak and pine. In the South and West it is opposed to "light wood."

**HARNESS-CASK**. A conical cask bound with iron hoops, from which salt meat is served out at sea. The cask is usually painted green and the hoops black; the resemblance of the latter to the black leathern straps of harness, has probably given rise to the name.

**HASTY PUDDING**. Indian meal stirred into boiling water until it becomes a thick batter or pudding, and eaten with milk, butter, and sugar or molasses. In Pennsylvania and some other States it is called *mush*; in New York, *suppawon*. Joel Barlow wrote a poem on the subject, in which he thus accounts for its name:

Thy name is *Hasty Pudding*! thus our sires  
 Were wont to greet thee fuming from their fires;  
 And while they argued in thy just defence,  
 With logic clear they thus explain'd the sense;  
 "In *haste* the boiling caldron o'er the blaze  
 Receives and cooks the ready-powder'd maize;  
 In *haste* 't is serv'd; and then in equal *haste*,  
 With cooling milk, we make the sweet repast,"  
 Such is thy name, significant and clear,  
 A name, a sound to every Yankee dear. — *Canto I.*

Father and I went down to camp,  
 Along wi' Captain Goodin,  
 And there we see the men and boys,  
 As thick as *hasty puddin*. — *Song, Yankee Doodle.*

Hasty pudding has long been eaten in England, where it is made of milk and flour. Mr. Greave, in his *Spiritual Quixote*, printed in Lon-

don in 1773, says : "There is a certain farinaceous composition, which, from its being frequently used by our ancestors as an extempore supplement to a scanty dinner, has obtained the appellation of a hasty pudding. It is composed of milk and flour boiled together." We find it again mentioned in the European Magazine for March, 1796, in an "Epitaph," sent as a hint to a water-drinker.

Here lies Ned Rand, who on a sudden  
Left off roast beef for *hasty pudding* ;  
Forsook old stinge mild and stale,  
And every drink, for Adam's ale.

HAT. Our Northern women have almost discarded the word *bonnet*, except in "*sun-bonnet*," and use the term *hat* instead. A like fate has befallen the word *gown*, for which both they and their Southern sisters commonly use *frock* or *dress*.

HATCHET. "To bury the *hatchet*," is to make peace. A phrase alluding to the Indian ceremony of burying the war-hatchet, or tomahawk, when making a peace.

They smoked the pipe of peace together, and the colonel claimed the credit of having, by his diplomacy, persuaded the sachem to *bury the hatchet*. — *Irving's Washington*, Vol. I. p. 361.

So, "to take up the *hatchet*" is to declare war ; to commence hostilities.

Shingis, sachem of the Delawares, was one of the greatest warriors of his tribe, and "*took up the hatchet*" at various times against the English. — *Irving, Life of Washington*, Vol. I. p. 78.

HATE. A bit ; as, "I don't care a *hate*." "I did n't eat a *hate*." "I did n't get a *hate*." It is the Scotch *haet*, as in the phrase, "fient a *haet*," i. e. the devil a bit.

HAW-HAW. To laugh heartily.

I sat down in front of the General, and we *haw-haw'd*, I tell you, for more than half an hour. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 189.

He burst out a larfin', and staggered over to the sophy, and laid down and *haw-hawed* like thunder. — *Sam Slick*, 3d ser. ch. vii.

HAWK-EYE STATE. The State of Iowa. It is said to be so named after an Indian chief who was once a terror to voyageurs to its borders.

HAY BARRACK. (Dutch, *Hooi-berg*, a hay-rick.) A straw-thatched roof, supported by four posts, capable of being raised or lowered at pleasure, under which hay is kept. A term peculiar to New York State.

TO HAZE. 1. To riot, frolic.

W. had been drinking and was *hazing* about the street at night, acting somewhat

suspiciously or strangely [when the officer arrested him]. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.* Dec. 2, 1848.

I wish to all-fired smash I was to home, doin' chores about house, or *hazin'* round with Charity Bunker and the rest o' the gals at a squantum. — *Wise, Tales for the Marines.*

2. To urge or drive, especially with work; to harass. A seamen's term.

Mack was very dull at learning any thing connected with sea life, and made a clumsy sailor. The captain disliked him, and continually *hazed* him for his awkwardness. — *Browne's Whaling Cruise*, p. 187.

The surest way to make a man worthless and indifferent to the success of the voyage is to *haze* him, and find fault with him when he does his duty to the best of his ability. — *Ibid.* p. 90.

This term is used at Harvard College, says Mr. Hall in his "College Words," to express the treatment which Freshmen sometimes receive from the higher classes, and especially from the Sophomores.

Freshmen have got quietly settled down to work — Sophs have given up their *hazing*. — *Williams Quarterly*, Vol. II. p. 285.

We are glad to be able to read, that the absurd and barbarous custom of *hazing*, which has long prevailed in the college, is, to a great degree, discontinued. — *Harvard Magazine*, Vol. I. p. 413.

**HEAD-CHEESE.** The ears and feet of swine cut up fine, and, after being boiled, pressed into the form of a cheese. In Maryland it is always called "hog'shead cheese."

**TO HEAD OFF.** To get before, to intercept. Ex. "The thief ran fast, but the officer managed to *head* him *off*."

**HEAD-RIGHTS.** Grants of land made by Texas to the heads of families, under the colonization laws, in order to promote emigration.

So much of the vacant lands of the republic shall be surveyed and sectionized, in tracts of six hundred and forty, and three hundred and twenty acres each, as will be sufficient to satisfy all claims for scrip sold, soldier's claims, and *head-rights*. — *Laws of Texas*, Nov. 1828.

**HEAP.** A great many, a crowd; a great deal, much. So used at the South and West. A correspondent of the Commercial Advertiser thus notices the various uses of this word at the South: "*Heap* is a most prolific word in the Carolinas and Georgia among the common people, and, with children at least, in the best regulated families. 'How did you like Mr. Smith?' I ask. 'Oh! I liked him a *heap*,' will be the answer, if affirmative, in five cases out of six. It is synonymous with a majority, or a great many; as, 'We should have plenty of peaches, but a *heap* of them were killed by the frost.' It is synonymous even with *very*, as 'I

heard him preach a *heap* often; 'Oh! I'm lazy a *heap*.' It is also an English vulgarism, except in the adverbial sense.

To go to church in New York in any kind of tolerable style costs a *heap* a-year. I know very well the reason why a majority of you go to Beelzebub is, because you can't afford to go to heaven at the present exorbitant prices. — *Dow's Sermons*.

I was not idle, for I had a *heap* of talk with the folks in the house. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 87.

Baltimore used to be called Mob-town; but they are a *heap* better now, and are more orderly than some of their neighbors. — *Ibid.* p. 13.

HEARN, for *heard*.

I beg leave to suggest to you that the Tinnecum people don't care much about the elements of music, of which they've *hearn* tell these two hundred years. — *Knickerbocker Mag.* Vol. XVII, p. 37.

HEARTY AS A BUCK. A hunter's phrase, now in very common use.

Well, how d'ye do, any how?

So, so, middln'. I'm *hearty as a buck*, but can't jump jest so high. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 8.

HEATER PIECE. A gore or triangular piece of land, so called, probably, from a flat iron, the form of which it resembles. New England.

HEFT. 1. Weight; ponderousness. A colloquial term common to some parts of England and the Northern States.

2. Mr. Pickering says: "This noun is also used colloquially in America to signify the greater part or bulk of any thing, in expressions of this kind: 'A part of the crop was good, but the *heft* of it was bad.'"

We suppose the plan of Mr. Benton is, to connect the Continental Railroad with the line of communication by the great lakes, thus throwing the *heft* of the Pacific trade across the continent into the port of New York. — *N. Y. Herald*, Feb. 5, 1849.

My grief! 't was perfectly astonishun' to me that one mortal body could hold as much as the Doctor put in. No wonder he's so fat: they say he gets the *heft* of his livin' by contrivn' to get to one patient's house jest as dinner's ready, to another at tea time, and so on. — *F. M. Whicher. Account of a Donation Party*, p. 262.

Mr. Magwire carries on the shoemaking business quite extensive, and he's to his shop the *heft* of his time. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 100.

TO HEFT. To try the weight of any thing by lifting it. Local in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

I remember the great hog up in Danwich, that *hefted* nigh twenty score. — *Margaret*, p. 111.

HELD. Billiard players say "I *held* the ball," instead of I *holed* it. See *Found*.

**HELL-BENDER.** (*Menopoma alleganiensis*.) An animal allied to the salamander.—*Nat. Hist. New York*.

**HELL-DIVER.** See *Dipper*.

**HELP.** The common name, in New England, for servants, and for the operatives in a cotton or woollen factory; a term long in use and evidently brought from England.

It is ordered that James Penn shall have twenty shillings, to be divided among such of his servants and *helps* as have been employed about ye attendance of ye court, etc.—*Massachusetts Colonial Records*, 1645, Vol. II p. 139.

"I hain't kept no gal since Melussy was big enough to aid me," said the widow Bedott. "I think *helps* more plague than profit."—*Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 76.

I always want the kitchen *help* to do things as I want to have them done.—*New England Tales*.

**HEN-HAWK.** (*Falco lineatus*.) The popular name of the Red-shouldered Hawk of naturalists.

**HERB.** In America universally pronounced *erb*; whereas in England the *h* is often aspirated. Thus in the Quarterly Review for July, 1857, occurs the following passage: "The peasant gathered *a* herb which was considered a specific in the district where he was born." An American would have written "*an* herb."

**HERN**, for *hers*. A vulgarism often heard among the uneducated. It is included by Pegge in his list of cockneyisms. See *Hesn*.

**HESSIAN FLY.** (*Cecidomya destructor*.) An insect famous for its ravages on wheat. The popular name of it is owing to the belief that it was introduced into America by the Hessian troops in their straw from Germany, during the year 1776, at which time the British army, then in occupation of Staten Island, received large reinforcements of Hessians under General de Heister. This idea has been ridiculed by many European entomologists, who have asserted that the insect is strictly American. It appears, however, that its existence has long been known, probably for more than a century, in France, Germany, Switzerland, and some of the larger islands of the Mediterranean.—*N. Y. Hind. Insects and Diseases injurious to Wheat*.

**HET.** Pret. and part. of *to heat*.—*Pickering*. Often heard in the mouths of illiterate people.

**HICKORY.** A name given to several species of *Carya*. They are handsome trees, with timber valuable for its hardness and toughness, and with edible nuts. Hence a "*hickory* Catholic," for instance, is a flexible, yielding one. Western.



**HICKORY NUT.** See *Walnut*.

**HICKORY SHIRT.** A shirt made of heavy twilled cotton with a narrow blue stripe, so called from its strength. These shirts are much worn by laborers.

Swindling practicers of trade flaunt in silks, while honest virtue staves off starvation by making *hickory shirts* at eight cents a piece. — *Doesticks*, p. 68.

**TO HIDE.** To beat. Used also in various parts of England.

When I was a little boy—they coaxed me to take all the jawings, and all the *hidings*, and to go first into all sorts of scrapes. — *J. C. Neale, Sketches*.

**TO HIFER.** To loiter. Used in North Pennsylvania.

**HIGHBINDER.** A riotous fellow. New York slang.

**HIGHBELIA.** See *Lowbelia*.

**HIGHER LAW.** A law higher, or above that of the Constitution; the laws of God. This term was first used by the Hon. William H. Seward, in a speech in the United States Senate, in March, 1850, on "Freedom in the New Territories," and has since been frequently heard in that body and elsewhere. In this speech the Senator said:

I know there are laws of various kinds, which regulate the conduct of men. There are constitutions and statutes, codes mercantile and civil; but when we are legislating for States, especially when we are founding States, all these laws must be brought to the standard of the laws of God. The Constitution regulates our stewardship; the Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defence, to welfare, to liberty. But there is a *higher law* than the Constitution, which regulates our authority over the domain. — *Speeches*, Vol. I. pp. 66 and 74.

**HIGHFALUTEN.** High flown language, bombast. This word is in common use in the West, and bids fair to spread over the country. There can be little doubt of its derivation from "highflying."

I was at the Barnburners' convention in Utica, and the first person I heard was a good-looking, fat, rosy-looking man—who got up and ground out what we term at the West a regular built fourth-of-July—star-spangled-banner—times-that-tried-men's-souls—Jefferson speech, making gestures to suit the *highfalutens*. — *Speech of Leslie Coombs, in N. York, Sept. 29, 1848*.

One of the boys, I reckon? All right on the goose, eh? No *highfaluten* airs here, you know. — *Gladstone, Englishman in Kansas*, p. 43.

**HIGH-HEELED SHOES.** To say of a woman that she "has on her *high-heeled shoes*" is to intimate that she sets herself up as a person of more consequence than others allow her to be; or in other words, that she is "stuck up." New England.

**HIGH-HOLE.** See *Clape*.

**TO HIRE.** Often improperly applied to *renting* a house. In good English a house is *rented*, while a vehicle or workman is *hired*.

**TO HIRE HIS TIME.** A slave is said to "*hire his time*" who contracts with his master to pay a stipulated price for his time, and during such time regulates his own conduct in respect to labor to be performed by him, or makes contracts as to such labor.

In Russia a certain yearly payment called Obrock, equivalent to a practice which prevails to a certain extent in some of our Southern States, of allowing slaves to *hire their own time*, goes a great way to extinguish all the distinctions between serfs and slaves. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Aug. 20, 1858.

**HISN**, for *his*, or *his own*. A vulgarism used in the United States, and embraced by Mr. Pegge in his list of London vulgar words.

**HITCH.** An entanglement, impediment.

All the *hitches* in the case of McNulty being got over, the gentlemen of the long robe set themselves at work in earnest. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.* 1845.

**TO HITCH HORSES.** It is a common expression, when persons do not agree, to say "they don't *hitch horses together*." Men who do not agree will not stop at the same house or tavern, or will not hitch their horses at the same stake. It is also contracted into "*do not hitch together*," and still further into, "*do not hitch*."

I never truckle to man, if he's as big as all out doors. And after he poked his fist in my face, one election, we never *hitched horses together*. — *McClintock Tales*.

I've been teamin' on't some for old Pendleton, and have come to drive a spell for this old fellow, but I guess we shan't *hitch* long. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 116.

**HINDOOS.** A name given to the Know Nothing party, in consequence of their candidate for the presidency, Daniel Ullman, having been charged with being a native of Calcutta.

**HITHER AND YON.** This expression is often used in the country towns of New England for *here and there*. It is provincial in the north of England. It is never heard in our seaport towns. — *Pickering*.

**HO.** A word used by teamsters to stop their teams. It has been used as a noun, for stop; moderation; bounds. — *Webster*. See *Whoa*.

Because, forsooth, some odd poet or some such fantastic fellows make much on him, there's no *ho* with him; the vile dandiprat will overlook the proudest of his acquaintance. — *Lingua, Old Play*.

Mr. Malone says it is yet common in Ireland; as, "there's no *ho* in him," that is, he knows no bounds. This expression is common in the United States.

**HOBBLE BUSH.** (*Viburnum lantanoides*.) A straggling shrub, also called Tangle-Legs and Wayfaring.

**TO HOBBLE.** To *hobble* a horse, is to tie his feet together, to hopple him.  
— *Webster*.

The horses were now *hobbled*, that is to say, their fore legs were fettered with cords and leathern straps, so as to impede their movements and prevent their wandering from camp. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**HO-BOY, or HAUT-BOY.** A nightman. New York.

The Thames, below London, is odorous with the sewerage matter it bears from that metropolis; and there is scarce a stream flowing through a civilized community but is degraded to the occupation of a *haut-boy*, by the adoption along the banks of itself and tributaries of more or less ingenious devices for dissolving and washing away rather than hoarding up and rendering useful the nitrogenized material which, if properly applied, will enable the earth to yield the most bountiful harvests. — *Scientific American*, Aug. 8, 1857.

**HOCKEY-STICK.** A stick used in playing hockey.

I guess Aunt Libby never had a *hockey-stick*. — *Fanny Fern*.

**HOD-CARRIER.** A laborer that carries mortar and bricks in a hod to masons; a hodman.

**TO HOE ONE'S ROW.** To do one's share of a job, to attend to one's own business.

In ole Virginny, whar I war born,  
I eat hoe-cake, and hoe de corn;  
And Massa Tyler, he not slow  
To shew me how to hoe my row. — *Negro Melodies*.

**HOE-CAKE.** A cake of Indian meal, baked before the fire. In the interior parts of the country, where kitchen utensils do not abound, they are baked on a *hoe*; hence the name.

Some talk of *hoe-cake*, fair Virginia's pride;  
Rich Johnny-cake this mouth has often tried.  
Both please me well, their virtues much the same;  
Alike their fabric as allied their fame.

*J. Barlow, Hasty Pudding.*

As we've broken *hoe-cake* together, we cannot rake up the old ashes to make dust with. — *Limms, The Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 10.

They [the ancient Marylanders] were great horse-racers and cock-fighters; mighty wrestlers and jumpers, and enormous consumers of *hoe-cake* and bacon. — *W. Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**HOE-DOWN.** Another name for *Break-down*, which see.

**HOG-AGE.** The age between boyhood and manhood. Nantucket.

**HOG AND HOMINY.** Pork and Indian Corn, the usual fare of country people in the West. The term is used for the sake of the alliteration even where the ground meal is much more common than the hominy.

I can give you plenty to eat; for, besides *hog* and *hominy*, you can have bar

(bear) ham and bar sausages, and a mattress of bar-skins to sleep on. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas.*

**HOG GUESSING.** A sport peculiar to Long Island. In the fall a fat hog is selected to be "guessed for." The chances are put at a given price as in a raffle, and at the time appointed each holder of a chance "guesses" at the weight of the hog, which is then determined in the presence of all by the scales; the best guess, of course, takes the animal.

**HOG-REEVE.** An officer whose duty it is to take up hogs running at large for the purpose of impounding them. New England. In the Statutes he is called a *Field Driver*, which see.

A man who can get down on his face and eat dirt after that fashion for nothing but a beggarly office, is not fit for a *hog-reeve*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1858.

**HOG-TIGHT AND HORSE-HIGH.** Always used together, of fences that are sufficient to restrain trespassing stock. Maryland.

**HOG-WALLOW.** On some of the Western prairies, but particularly those in Texas, the ground has every appearance of having been rooted or torn up by hogs; hence the name.

Professor Riddell gives the following account of the *hog-wallow* prairies and of their origin: "The long droughts in summer cause the woodless surface of the prairies to crack deeply, and oftentimes symmetrically; subsequent rains wash the adjacent earth into these cracks, filling them up, converting them into little valleys, and leaving intermediate hillocks. Next year the same round of cause and effects occurs in the same places; and thus successive years contribute for a long time to produce a maximum of effect, the appearance of which is very striking. When the prairie is level, the hillocks are exactly hexagonal, and usually eight or ten feet in diameter. The depressions between them are commonly twelve to eighteen inches deep. If the surface is inclined, the hexagons become elongated at right angles to the elongation of the dip, when they frequently resemble the waves of the ocean. From difference of surface, soil, and exposure, there arises a great diversity in the size, depth, and general appearance of the *hog-wallows*. They never occur in a sandy soil, consequently they are not seen on the sandy prairies near the sea-coast." — *Silliman's Journal of Science*, Vol. XXXIX. p. 211.

The ground we were riding over, known as *hog-wallow*, being a succession of small mounds and corresponding hollows. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas.*

**TO HOLD ON.** To wait, stop; as, "*Hold on a minute*;" originally a sea phrase. Also, to hold fast, to keep, as "*He held on to the money*."

**TO HOLLOO BEFORE ONE IS OUT OF THE WOODS.** To rejoice prematurely, before one is out of a difficulty.

In a few minutes we were back in the harbor again, and I gave Joe a piece of my

mind about *holleing* before we were out of the woods. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 105

**TO HOLLOO.** (Pron. *holler*.) To give up; to quit; to yield. In vulgar use at the West, originating probably in wrestling or fighting, where the party down *halloos*, i. e. cries out, in which case he is understood to yield. I once heard a Western man say he had "*hollored* on drinking," meaning that he had quit the practice.

Tige was using me powerful rough, and had done whipped me; but pshaw! I never did *holler*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**HOLP.** The old preterite and past part. of *Help*. "This antiquated inflection of the verb *to help* is still used in Virginia, where it is corrupted into *holped*." — *Pickering*.

**HOLR**, for *hold*. A vulgar pronunciation, heard in England as well as in this country.

Then the varmint appeared to me, but I tripped him the first pass I made; but he war up before I could get my *holt* on him, and he caught me by the leg, and I could n't get him loose for a long time." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**HOME.** 1. England, Great Britain; a term in common use among natives of Great Britain, as well as those of English descent resident in the United States and Canada. Some say "the Old Country." This term is of ancient use, and Mr. Irving, in his *Life of Washington*, says he "remembers when the endearing phrase still lingered on Anglo-Saxon lips even after the Revolution;" and that its use by Washington himself, "evinces the chord which still vibrated in the American bosom." In a letter to George Mason (1769), speaking of the difficulty arising from the clashing interests of merchants, Washington says:

In the tobacco colonies where the trade is so diffused, and in a manner wholly conducted by factors for their principals at *home*, these difficulties are enhanced.

Again, in a letter to his brother Augustine, written in April, 1755, he says:

My command was reduced, under a pretence of an order from *home*.

2. *Home* is frequently used for at home, in one's own dwelling; as, "I breakfasted *home*." "How's all *home*?"

**HOMINY.** Food made of maize or Indian corn boiled, the maize being either coarsely ground, or broken, or the kernels merely hulled. — *Flint, Mississippi Valley*. Roger Williams, in his Key to the Indian Language, has the word *aupúminea*, parched corn — which, with the accent on the second syllable, has much the sound of *hominy*.

The Indians sift the flour out of their meal, which they call *samp*; the remainder they call *hominy*. This is mixt with flour and made into puddings. — *Josselyn's New England Rarities*, 1672, p. 53.

The Indians live chiefly on maize, or Indian corn roasted in the ashes, sometimes beaten and boyled with water, called *homine* — *Thomas's Pennsylvania*. London, 1698, p. 49.

*Hominy* is Indian corn soaked, husked, and then boiled in water over a gentle fire:—the thin of this is what my Lord Bacon calls "cream of maize." — *Beverly's Virginia*, Book III. 1725.

"Stranger," said old Schultz (the backwoodsman), "you have been welcome under my roof. I've given you nothing but wild meat and *hominy*, because I had no better; but I've been glad of your company." — *Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 271.

**HOMMOCK, HUMMOCK, or HAMMOCK.** In Florida a name given to small elevations or islands in the "everglades," or lands covered by fresh water swamp. They are supposed to have been coral islands before the mud and sand were deposited around them.

The Indians retired from the neighborhood of the whites, and burying themselves in the deep forests, intricate swamps and *hommocks*, and vast savannahs, devoted themselves to a pastoral life. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 290.

**HOMMOCKY.** Filled with hommocks.

The Seminoles possess a vast territory in Florida; and being such a swampy, *hommocky* country, it furnishes supplies for the nourishment of varieties of animals. — *Bartram's Travels in N. America*.

**HONEY-FOGLE.** To humbug, swindle, cheat. West and South. *Coney-fogle*, to lay plots, a Lancashire word, noticed by Mr. Halliwell in his Dictionary of Archaic and Prov. Words, may be the origin of it.

When the Loco-focos take you round a corner, and try to *honey-fogle* you, as they say in Kentucky, ask them what are Cass's civil qualities. — *Speech of F. Smith at a Taylor Meeting, Washington*.

The Washington correspondent of The New Orleans Delta writes, 1858, as follows:

I have a passion for Seward. He comes up to my idea of Rodin in the Wandering Jew — the most delectable devil that was ever drawn by human pen — so cool, so clear-headed, so indomitable, so relentless in the pursuit of his fiendish purposes. If he becomes our next President, and disunion does not immediately follow his election, I will wager that he will so beautifully *honey-fuggle* both South and North, that the people will pronounce him one of the best Presidents we have ever had.

**HONEY LOCUST.** (*Gleditschia triacanthus*.) A tree so called from the sweet pulp in its ripe pods. In the West and South it is called the Thorny Locust.

**HONEYSUCKLE, or SWAMP HONEYSUCKLE.** A name improperly but commonly applied to the *Azalea viscosa* and *nudiflora*.

**HONORABLE.** A title given by courtesy to members of both houses of congress, and of State legislatures; also to heads of departments of the government, as secretaries and commissioners. The title is ever afterwards retained, under the rule of "Once an honorable, always an honorable."

**HOOK.** (Dutch, *hoek*, a corner, a cape.) This name is given, in New York, to several angular points in the North and East Rivers; as, Corlear's *Hook*, Powle's *Hook*, Sandy *Hook*.

**TO HOOK.** To steal. A common vulgarism, formerly used in England.

A maid *hooked* one of her mistress's dresses the other day; but the affair was passed over, because it was done behind the lady's back. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1857.

**ON ONE'S OWN HOOK.** A phrase much used in familiar language, denoting on one's own account; as, "He is doing business *on his own hook*," i. e. for himself.

I now resolved to do business entirely alone — to go *on my own hook*. If I get rich, the money will all be mine. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 195

Every man *on his own hook* is the system in action of the American volunteer soldier; and trusting to, and confident in, their undeniable bravery, they go ahead and overcome all obstacles. — *Ruxton's Adventures in Mexico*, p. 179.

We have every reason to believe that the time is fast approaching when we shall have our American Pope, our American Catholic Cardinals, and American Catholic every thing *on our own hook*. — *N. Y. Herald*, October, 1845.

I went to the opera in London, where I kept lookin' round; and when anybody laughed, I laughed too, and when they 'plauded, I 'plauded too; and sometimes, jest to make 'em think I was a reglar Frenchy, I'd laugh right out *on my own hook*. — *N. Y. Family Companion*.

**HOOKE.** A resident of the Hook, i. e. a strumpet, a sailor's trull. So called from the number of houses of ill-fame frequented by sailors at the Hook (i. e. Corlear's Hook) in the city of New York.

**HOOKEY.** To "play *hookey*" is to play truant. A term used among school-boys, chiefly in the State of New York.

**HOOPLE.** (Dutch, *hoepel*.) The boys in the city of New York still retain this Dutch name for a trundling hoop.

**HOOSIER.** A nickname given, at the West, to natives of Indiana.

A correspondent of the Providence Journal, writing from Indiana, gives the following account of the origin of this term: "Throughout all the early Western settlements were men who rejoiced in their physical strength, and on numerous occasions, at log-rollings and house-raising, demonstrated this to their entire satisfaction. They were styled by their fellow-citizens *hushers*, from their primary capacity to still their

opponents. It was a common term for a bully throughout the West. The boatmen of Indiana were formerly as rude and as primitive a set as could well belong to a civilized country, and they were often in the habit of displaying their pugilistic accomplishments upon the Levee at New Orleans. Upon a certain occasion there, one of these rustic professors of the 'noble art' very adroitly and successfully practised the 'fancy' upon several individuals at one time. Being himself not a native of this Western world, in the exuberance of his exultation he sprang up, exclaiming, in foreign accent, 'I'm a *hoosier*, I'm a *hoosier*.' Some of the New Orleans papers reported the case, and afterwards transferred the corruption of the epithet 'husher' (*hoosier*) to all the boatmen from Indiana, and from thence to all her citizens. The Kentuckians, on the contrary, maintained that the nickname expresses the gruff exclamation of their neighbors, when one knocks at a door, etc., 'Who's yere?'"

There was a long-haired *hoosier* from Indiana, a couple of smart-looking suckers from Illinois, a keen-eyed, leather-belted badger from Wisconsin; and who could refuse to drink with such a company?—*Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 210.

Broad Indiana's *hoosier* sons her fame must needs keep good,  
By healthful sport of rolling logs and stumping in the wood.

*The American Congress, Am. Rejected Addresses.*

**HOOSIER CAKE.** A Western name for a sort of coarse gingerbread, which, say the Kentuckians, is the best bait to catch a *hoosier* with, the biped being fond of it.

**HOOTER.** Probably a corruption of *iota*. Common in New York in such phrases as "I don't care a *hooter* for him," "this note ain't worth a *hooter*."

It is the truth that politicians who pretend to have such regard for the dear people don't care a *hooter*, so long as their own selfish ends are attained —*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 6.

**HOP.** A dance. —*Johnson*. This word has always been used here as in England as a familiar term for *dance*; but of late years it has been employed among us in a technical sense, to denote a dance where there is less display and ceremony than at regular balls. At Saratoga Springs, where a large majority of the people are strangers to each other, it is customary to have a dance or *hop* at the fashionable hotels three times a week, during the season when the waters are most resorted to.

**HOPED.** Used among the illiterate in North Carolina as the past part. of *to help*. Ex. "It can't be *hoped*." See *Holp*.

**HOPPING JOHN.** A stew of bacon and peas with red pepper. South Carolina.



Miss Fustick said Liddy Ann was too old to wear plumes. Old Miss C— went straight and told her; which made Liddy *hoppin' mad*, and led to an awful quarrel. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 275.

**HOPPING MAD.** Exceedingly angry, in a violent rage. A very common colloquial expression.

**HOPSCOTCH.** A game well known to our boys. A figure is drawn upon the ground in the form of a parallelogram, which is subdivided in several parts. A small stone is thrown successively into each, and is knocked out by a boy hopping on one leg, without resting, until he has thrown and knocked it from every division of the figure. Mr. Hartshorn notices the word in his Shropshire Glossary. But the common term in England is Scotch Hop or Scotch Hoppers.

**HORN.** A dram. Probably so named from the old custom of drinking out of a horn.

The chaplain gave us a pretty stiff *horn* of liquor a-piece—and first-rate stuff it was, I swow. — *Burton, Waggeries*.

Faith, said Patrick, if you had seen me sell Father Mathews's medal, which he blessed and gave me with his own hand, to a boy, for three cents, just to get a *horn* of whiskey, you would not ask me if I loved the creatur'. — *Milne, Temperance Tale*.

He poured out a tumbler of brandy and water, that warn't half and half, but almost the whole hog. Oh, gummy, what a *horn*! It was strong enough to throw an ox over a five bar gate. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*.

**IN A HORN.** A low phrase, now common, used to qualify a falsehood, equivalent to the English "over the left." A boy will say, "I saw a man jump over the house," and add *sotto voce*, "*In a horn*;" meaning thereby directly the reverse.

"Tie the boat up!" says Jim. "I'll tie her up, *in a horn*! Do you reckon I can't run her in such a fog as we'll have to-night?" — *May, Bunkum, in N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I have mentioned before the innumerable comforts—in a *horn*—of the old White Sulphur Springs. I think it hardly necessary that I should recapitulate; for there is never any change: raw beef, tough mutton, and tolerably fine ham is the regular bill of fare, and there is no variation that I have seen or heard of. — *Evening (Wash.) Star*, August 26, 1858.

**HORNED GREBE.** See *Dipper*.

**HORNED POUT.** See *Catfish*.

**HORNED SUCKER.** See *Chub Sucker*.

**HORRORS.** "To have the *horrors*" is to be in low spirits, to have a fit of the blues. It also means to have delirium tremens.

Now, when steam distilling wrenches the last possible drop of spirit out of the corn, it brings with it an unusual quantity of this poison [fusil oil], which acts with

terrible results on the nerves; seeming like a diabolical inspiration, stirring up mania, convulsions, and the horrors, in an incredibly short space of time. — *Philad. Evening Bulletin*, 1857.

**HORSE AND HORSE.** Even. Originally applied to horses which in running a race come in side by side, or, as the phrase is, "neck and neck;" and then transferred to gamesters. A story is told of a planter, who, sending his son to market with a load of cotton, received from young hopeful the following statement on his return:

"Why, daddy, you see, I sot down to old sledge along with Jake Stebbins. It was *horse and horse*, and his deal. Says he, 'Bill, will you go the cotton?' 'Done,' says I; and don't you think if the dern fool didn't turn jack!" — *Bunkum's Recollections*.

**HORSE-CAKE.** Gingerbread rudely fashioned into the shape of a horse.

**HORSE-COLT.** We frequently see in advertisements these terms, *horse-colt*, *mare-colt*, etc. A *horse-colt* is simply a *colt*; a *mare-colt*, merely a *filly*. — *Portfolio*, 2d Series, Vol. II. 309.

**HORSE-FOOT.** (*Limulus polyphemus*.) The common name of a crustacean found in our waters from Massachusetts to Virginia, and in some places so abundant as to be used for manure. In form it much resembles a horse's hoof. It is also called Horse-shoe and King-crab, which latter is the name by which it is known in England.

**HORSE-MACKEREL.** See *Blue Fish*.

**HORSE-NETTLE.** (*Solanum carolinense*.) A plant well known for its orange yellow berries. It is remarkable that a similar species is known in Brazil by the same name in Portuguese.

**HORSE-SHOE.** See *Horse-Foot*.

**HOSE.** The Western term for "stockings," which is considered extremely indelicate, although "long socks" is pardonable.

**HOSS.** (A corruption of the word *horse*.) A man remarkable for his strength, courage, etc. A vulgarism peculiar to the West. Even of a prominent lady a Western eulogist will say, "she's a *hoss*," that is, a sort of Pandora or nonsuch.

*Hoss Allen* is powerful popular, and the "bar" hunters admire his free and easy manners, and consider him one of the people — none of your stuck-up, imported chaps from the dandy States, but a genuine Westerner — in short, a *hoss*! — *Robb, Squatter*, p. 70.

I see thar was mischief in the preacher as big as a meetin' house, and I determined to give him as good as he sent; so I looked at him sorter savagerous like, and says I, "Look here, *hoss*, how can you have the face to talk to me, arter what you said?" — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

HOSTILES. Enemies. Western.

HOTEL DISEASE. A disease which broke out among the guests at the National Hotel in Washington in the year 1856, somewhat resembling cholera, attended with vomiting, diarrhoea, and rapid general prostration. Similar symptoms have since shown themselves at some other hotels, though not with the same virulence.

HOUNDS. 1. A gang of ruffians who infested San Francisco in 1849. They also styled themselves "Regulators." Their murderous excesses were committed under the pretence of guarding the community against the encroachments of Spanish foreigners.

2. The portions of a wagon which, projecting from the forward axle, form a support for the tongue or pole. The term is borrowed from nautical language, in which it means the projecting parts or head of the mast, serving as shoulders for the top or trestle-trees to rest on.

HOURL. *An hour by sun* means an hour before sunset. Southern and Western.

HOUSE. Used to form compounds, such as *meat-house*, *wash-house*, *milk-house*; where an Englishman would say respectively, laundry, larder, dairy.

HOUSE-HUNTING. In the city of New York most houses are let from the first day of May, and the landlords have assumed to themselves the right of requiring from their tenants a decision, as to whether they will keep their houses or not, three months before the period for which they hired them expires. On those houses which are not hired for another term (usually a year), "bills" are put up by the landlords, signifying that they are to let. Persons who intend to "move," traverse that section of the city in which they desire to establish themselves, in search of a suitable house, in which search they are guided by the landlord's "bills." This is called *house-hunting*, and is practised by thousands every year.

Polly began to grow uneasy now, because we had n't got no house, and said I ought to go a *house-hunting* as everybody else did, or else we should be turned out of doors. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New-York.*

TO HOUSE-KEEP is a verb, formed on the same principle as the verb *to bloodlet*, which is credited in the dictionaries to Arbuthnot. Southern.

HOUSEN, as the plural of *house*. This old form is still used by the illiterate in the interior of New England, as also in the States of New York and New Jersey. It is provincial in various parts of England.

Cornelius Nepos writeth that the *housen* in Rome were no otherwise covered overhead but with shundles [shingles] until the war with King Pyrrhus, to wit for the space of 470 years after the foundation of the city. — *Holland's Pliny*, XVI. 10.

That day at *housen* so she stopped

She was behind for dinner — *Essex Dialect*, p. 14.

It is enacted by the court and authorities thereof, that henceforth no person or persons shall permit any meetings of the Quakers to be in his house or *housing*. — *Plymouth Colony Laws*, 1661.

I testify that about forty-two yeares from this date Richard Smith had quiet possession of his *housing*, land, and meadows. — *Letter from Roger Williams, R. I. Col. Records*, 1674, Vol. III. p. 53.

#### HOUSEN-STUFF. Household furniture.

On the first day of May, at 12 o'clock, if the tenant is n't out, an officer goes and puts him into the street, neck and heels, with his wife and children and all his *housen-stuff*. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 30.

A wife would make good *housen-stuff*;

If she were downright clever;

And Sall could suit me well enough,

If she would let me have her. — *Song, Yankee Doodle*.

HOVE. (Ang. Sax. *hof*, pret. of *heafan*, to heave.) This old preterite is much used by illiterate persons in the United States.

HOW? Used chiefly in New England, like the French *comment*? in asking for the repetition of something not understood.

Do put your accents in the proper spot;

Don't — let me beg you — don't say "*How*?" for "*What*?"

O. W. Holmes, *Poems*.

HOW COME? (Pron. *huc-cum*.) How came it? how did it happen? Southern.

HOW DE? A still further contraction of *how d'ye*? for how do you do? Southern.

HOW FARE YOU? This is a common expression, in some parts of New England, for "How do you do?" It is pronounced short, as, "*How fa' ye*?"

Newman. What, come back so soon? *How fare you*, Doolittle?

Doolittle. Cleverly. Steady, pretty steady, and quite chirk again; I thank you.

— *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

HUB. The nave of a wheel. The word is provincial in England.

HUBBY. Uneven, rough. A term applied to roads, particularly when frozen. The original word, still used provincially in England, is *hobbly*.

HUCKLEBERRY. (*Gaylussacia*.) A small shrub and its small, globular, black, sweet fruit, resembling the Whortleberry of England, whence it is sometimes called by that name.

As to *huckleberry* and blackberry pies, you will find them [in Connecticut] just as  
— *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, I. 305.

**HUCKLEBERRY ABOVE THE PERSIMMON.** To be a *huckleberry above one's persimmon* is a Southern phrase, meaning to be above one's ability.

The way he and his companions used to destroy the beasts of the forests was *huckleberry above the persimmon* of any native in the country. — *Thorpe, Backwoods*, p. 166.

**HUGE PAWS.** A nickname given to the working men of the Loco Foco party in New York.

The *Huge Paws* ought to have another meeting in Tammany Hall, before they make their nominations. — *N Y. Herald*, Oct. 7, 1846.

**HULL.** A vulgar pronunciation of the word *whole*, very common in New England.

**HULLS.** The husks of peas, etc. At the South, applied also to the shells of oysters.

**TO HULL.** To free from the husks : accordingly, to *hull* peas, is to shell them ; to *hull* oysters, to open them. Southern.

**HUM.** A vulgar pronunciation of *home* ; as, "My old man ain't to *hum*," i. e. is not at home. New England.

Well, well, I know it now — "*hum* is *hum*, be it ever so humbly." I am desperd sick of being in strange parts. I wish I was at *hum* agin, under mother's own ruff, I guess — I know I do. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

When is charity like a top ? When it begins to *hum*. — *Baltimore Sun*.

**HUMAN**, for human being. Western.

As I was lookin' down the gully I espied a mighty big bear, that was travellin' my way. I had no idee that he was around, and am quite sartin he didn't expect to meet a *human* in such a place. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 224.

Parson Brownlow, the editor of the Knoxville Whig, is just as fierce upon dogs when they annoy him as he is upon the *humans* who cross his path. — *Harper's Mag.* Dec. 1857, p. 136.

What brings a duck a streaking it down stream if *humans* ain't behind her ? and who's in these diggins but Indians ? — *Ruxton's Far West*, p. 79.

The subject of woman, my dear hearers, is a difficult, a tender, and a delicate one. Woman, primarily, was a sort of second-hand *human*, or, I might say, the carnated superfluity of man. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**HUMBLY.** A vulgar mispronunciation of *homely*.

**HUNG.** In England it occasionally happens that great offenders are *hanged* ; but in the States and Canada criminals are never *hanged*, they are all *hung*. In England, beef is *hung*, gates are *hung*, and curtains are *hung* ; but felons are *hanged* ; in Canada, felons, beef, gates, and curtains are all treated the same way. — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

**HUNG BEEF.** Dried beef, so called from being *hung up* in the air to dry.

The hams were cut out, slightly salted, and hung up in the chimney to dry, and thus became dried or *hung beef* — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 66.

**HUNK.** 1. A large piece or slice; a big lump. Ex. "A great *hunk* of bread and cheese." It is a variation of the word *hunch*, which is used in England in precisely the same manner. See Grose and Moor's glossaries.

2. (Dutch, *honk*.) Place, post, home. A word descended from the Dutch children, and much used by New York boys in their play. "To be *hunk*," or "all *hunk*," is to have reached the goal or place of meeting without being intercepted by one of the opposite party, to be all safe.

This word has also made its way into political life. In a debate of the Board of Aldermen of New York (December, 1856), on the purchase of certain grounds on the East River for a market site, Alderman Ely said :

Mr. L—— had filled in and made this ground in the waters of the East River without authority; and now he felt himself all *hunk*, and wanted to get this enormous sum out of the city. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1856.

**HUNKERS.** Those who cling to the homestead or to old principles. A nickname given in the State of New York to the conservative wing of the Democratic party as opposed to the Young Democracy, or Barnburners. They are often called *Old Hunkers*.

Senator A—— has long coveted, and finally obtained, a leading position. He is now the leader of the *hunkers* of Missouri — a noble band, with just seven principles, and a foresight the exact length of their noses — *New York Evening Post*, July 11, 1849.

**HUNKERISM.** The doctrines of the Conservative Democracy, or Old Hunkers.

**TO HUNT.** To search for. "Kitty is *hunting* her bonnet." "Tom, *hunt* up the black boy," i. e. look for him.

**TO HUNT FOR MEAT.** At the Far West the hunter *hunts for meat*, when in search of food, in contradistinction to hunting for skins.

**HUNTING-SHIRT.** A blowse or shirt originally made of deerskin and highly ornamented, worn by trappers and hunters as well as by travellers on the Western frontier.

A light, figured, and fringed *hunting-shirt* of cotton covered his body, while leggings of deerskin rose to his knee. — *Cooper, Oak Openings*.

Rise up, Fremont ! and go before ;  
The hour must have its man ;  
Put on the *hunting-shirt* once more,  
And lead in Freedom's van ! — *Whittier*.

**HURRA'S NEST.** A state of confusion. A woman's word.

"Now just look at you, Mr. Jones! I declare! it gives me a chill to see you go to a drawer. What do you want? Tell me! and I will get it for you."

Mrs Jones springs to the side of her husband, who has gone to the bureau for something, and pushes him away.

"There now! Just look at the *hurra's nest* you have made! What *do* you want, Mr. Jones?" — *Arthur's Ladies' Magazine*.

"Hallo," says she, "here's the devil to pay, and no pitch hot. Are you goin' to kill that boy? Here's a pretty *hurra's nest*; let me see one of you dare to lay hands on this piccanniny" — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 59.

I lay till after daylight, and then one of my comrades shook me, to tell me that the Indian boys had found a *hurra's nest*. Out I went, and about a hundred yards from camp there was an old buffalo bull with a hundred little screeching imps about him with their bows and arrows. — *Crockett's Adventures*.

**HURRICANE.** (W. Ind. *urican*.) This word does not appear in any English dictionary before 1720, when Phillips notices it as a word denoting "a violent storm of wind, which often happens in Jamaica and other parts of the West Indies, making very great havoc and overthrow of trees, houses, etc." Other dictionaries of a later period describe it as a violent wind in the West Indies. It is the Carib name for a high wind, such as is described by Phillips, and was doubtless carried by seamen to Europe, whence it became introduced into various languages.

I shall next speak of *hurricanes*. These are violent storms, raging chiefly among the Caribbee Islands, though by relation Jamaica has of late years been much annoyed by them. They are expected in July, August, or September. — *Dampier, Voyages*, Vol. II. ch. 6.

To its covert glides the silent bird,  
While the *hurricane's* distant voice is heard  
Uplifted among the mountains round,  
And the forests hear and answer the sound. — *Bryant, The Hurricane*.

**HURRYMENT.** Hurry; confusion. Southern.

I always hate to kiss old women what hain't got no teeth; and I was monstrous glad old Miss Stallins had her handkerchief to her face, for in the *hurryment* I kissed it. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

**HURRY UP THE CAKES**, i. e. Be quick; look alive. This phrase, which has lately got into vogue, originated in the common New York eating-houses, where it is the custom for the waiters to bawl out the name of each dish as fast as ordered, that the person who serves up may get it ready without delay, and where the order, "*Hurry up them cakes*," etc. is frequently heard.

If you have any communications to make, *hurry them up*, hot and hasty, like buck-wheat cakes at a cheap eating-house — *Dow's Sermons*, p. 51.

**TO HUSH UP.** To cease speaking, to be silent, to hush. *To dry up*, and *to shut up*, are other vulgar expressions with the same meaning.

**HUSKING.** The act of stripping off husks from Indian corn; generally

called "shucking" in the South and West. In New England, it is the custom for farmers to invite their friends to assist them in this task. The ceremonies on these occasions, called also *Husking Bees* and *Husking Frolics*, are well described by Joel Barlow, in his poem on Hasty Pudding :

For now, the cow-house fill'd, the harvest home,  
Th' invited neighbors to the *husking* come ;  
A frolic scene, where work and mirth and play  
Unite their charms to chase the hours away.

The laws of *husking* every wight can tell ;  
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well :  
For each red ear a gen'ral kiss he gains,  
With each smut ear she smuts the luckless swains ;  
But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,  
Red as her lips, and taper as her waist,  
She walks around, and culls one favor'd beau,  
Who leaps, the luscious tribute to bestow.  
Various the sport, as are the wits and brains  
Of well-pleas'd lasses and contending swains ;  
Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,  
And he that gains the last ear wins the day. — *Canto 3.*

He talked of a turkey-hunt, a *husking-bee*, thanksgiving ball, racing, and a variety of things — *Margaret*, p. 48.

He counts his cousin Phebe no better in her home upon the Avenue than when she played barefooted at the old *husking-frolics* of Newtown. — *Ike Marvel*, *Fudge Doings*.

**HYP.** An abbreviation of *hypochondria*.

The old man would give up to the *hypo* and keep his bed for weeks. During this time he would n't say a word, but "I'm not long for this world." — *Haliburton*, *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 176.

**HYST.** (Corruption of *hoist*.) A violent fall. Ex. "His foot slipped, and he got a *hyst*." Mr. J. C. Neal thus discourses on this word : A *fall*, for instance, is indeterminate. It may be an easy slip down — a gentle visitation of mother earth ; but a *hyst* is a rapid, forcible performance, which may be done either backward or forward, but of necessity with such violence as to knock the breath out of the body, or it is unworthy of the noble appellation of *hyst*. It is an apt but figurative mode of expression, and it is often carried still further ; for people sometimes say, "Lower him up, and *hyst* him down." — *Charcoal Sketches*.

I can't see the ground, and every dark night am sure to get a *hyst* — either a forrerd *hyst* or a backerd *hyst*, or some sort of a *hyst*, but more backerds than forrerd. — *J. C. Neal*, *Sketches*.

One of the most unfeelin' tricks I know of is the way some folks have got of langhing out when they see a gentleman catching a regular *hyst*, with his legs in the air, and his noddle splat down on the cold bricks. A *hyst* is bad enough without being sniggered at. — *New England Tales*.



Pity, kind gentle folks, friends of humanity,  
 Twig how the pavements are covered with ice ;  
 Sprinkle the sidewalks with ashes for charity,  
 Scatter the ashes and save us a *hyst*.

(*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, Feb. 4, 1857.

## I.

I DAD ! An exclamation used in the Western States.

"*I dad !* if I did n't snatch up Ruff and kiss him " Here the emotion of the old man made a pause. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 179.

ILK. In Scotland and the North of England it signifies *the same* ; as, "Mackintosh of that *ilk*" denotes a gentleman whose surname and the title of his estate are the same ; as "Mackintosh of Mackintosh." — *Worcester*.

By a curious perversion, political newspaper writers in America often use the phrase "of that *ilk*," in the sense of "of that sort, stamp, class." Thus the Baltimore Sun of the 15th of May, 1854, says :

"The Journal of Commerce and the True Democrat both denounce in advance the meeting called in the New York Park, Saturday afternoon [to censure Senator Douglas's Nebraska Bill], as a thorough abolition demonstration : in proof of which the names of John Van Buren, Benjamin F. Butler, and others of that *ilk*, that were promised to speak, are referred to.

ILL. Vicious. This strange application of the word is common in Texas ; as, "Is your dog *ill*?" meaning, is he vicious. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 78.

ILLY. A word used by writers of an inferior class, who do not seem to perceive that *ill* is itself an adverb, without the termination *ly*. The late Dr. Messer, President of Brown University, on seeing this word in a composition submitted to his critical inspection, asked of the student who presented it, "Why don't you say *welly*?"

Distressed as my mind is, and has been by a variety of attentions ; I am *illy* able by letter to give you the satisfaction I could wish on the subjects of your letter. — *Letter of Richard H. Lee to his Sister*, 1778.

"My good friend," said the man of gravity, "have you not undergone what they call hard times ; been set upon and persecuted, and very *illy* entreated, by some of your fellow-creatures ?" — *Putnam's Monthly*, August, 1854.

IMMEDIATELY, for *as soon as*. Ex. "The deer fell dead *immediately* they shot him."

IMMIGRANT. A person that removes into a country for the purpose of a permanent residence. — *Webster*.

IMMIGRATION. (Lat. *immigratio*.) The passing or removing into a country for the purpose of a permanent residence. — *Webster*.

The *immigrations* of the Arabians into Europe, and the Crusades, produced numberless accounts, partly true and partly fabulous, of the wonders seen in Eastern countries. — *Warton's Hist. Eng. Poetry*, Vol. I.

*Immigration* has doubtless been a prolific source of multiplying words. — *Hamilton, Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 381.

Mr. Pickering, in his Vocabulary, observes that this word, as well as *immigrant* and the verb *to immigrate*, were first used in this country by Dr. Belknap, in his History of New Hampshire, who gives his reasons for their use. *Immigrant* is original with Dr. B.; but the others have long been used by good English authors, though of course less frequently than by American writers, who have more need of them.

TO IMPROVE. 1. To render more valuable by additions, as houses, barns, or fences on a farm. Thus we frequently see advertisements of a piece of ground *improved* by a dwelling and out-houses.

Where lands lye in common unfenced, if one man shall *improve* his land by fencing in several, and another shall not, he who shall *improve* shall secure his lands against other men's cattle. — *Mass. Colony Laws*, 1642.

2. To occupy; to make use of, employ. Thus some persons speak of an "*improved*" or an "*unimproved*" house, meaning one occupied or unoccupied. "This word," says Mr. Pickering, "in the first sense, is in constant use in all parts of New England; but in the second sense (when applied to persons, as in the following example), it is not so common."

In action of trespass against several defendants, the plaintiffs may, after issue is closed, strike out any of them for the purpose of *improving* them as witnesses. — *Swift's System of the Colony Laws of Connecticut*, Vol. II. p. 238.

In a petition from a Baptist society in the town of Newport, R. I., in 1783, for relief, they say:

Our meeting-house has been *improved* as a hospital by the English and afterwards by the French army, and so much injured as not to admit of being repaired. — *Acts of Assembly, Rhode Island*, June, 1783.

Dr. Franklin, in a letter to Dr. Webster, dated Dec. 26th, 1789, has the following remarks: "When I left New England in the year 1723, this word had never been used among us, as far as I know, but in the sense of *ameliorated* or *made better*, except once, in a very old book of Dr. Mather's, entitled *Remarkable Providences*."

Ann Cole, a person of serious piety, living in Hartford, in 1662, was taken with very strange fits, whereon her tongue was *improved* by a demon, to express things unknown to herself. — *Cotton Mather, Magnalia*, Book VI.

IMPROVEMENT. The part of a discourse intended to enforce and apply the doctrines is called the *improvement*. — *Webster*. Mr. Pickering has shown that the word is used also by Scottish writers.

The conclusion is termed, somewhat inaccurately, *making an improvement* of the

whole. The author, we presume, means, deducing from the whole what may contribute to the general *improvement*. — *British Critic*, Vol. I. p. 379

**IMPROVEMENTS.** Valuable additions or ameliorations; as buildings, clearings, drains, fences on a farm. — *Webster*.

**IN**, for *into*. Mr. Coleman, in remarking upon the prevalence of this inaccuracy in New York, says: "We get *in* the stage, and have the rheumatism *into* our knees." — *N. Y. Evening Post*, Jan. 6, 1814. An observing English friend at Philadelphia also speaks of its frequent use there in the following terms: "The preposition *into* is almost unknown here. They say, 'When did you come *in* town?' 'I met him riding *in* town.'" — *Pickering*.

**INAUGURAL.** The address of a public officer on his inauguration into office; an inaugural address. *Ex.* "Have you read the President's *inaugural*?"

**INCA.** (Kechua.) The title of a king or prince of Peru, before its conquest by the Spaniards.

**INDEBTEDNESS.** The state of being indebted. — *Chancellor Kent*. A modern word, reputed of American origin; not often used by English writers, yet it is found in the recent English dictionaries of Knowles and Smart. — *Worcester*.

**INDEPENDENCE DAY.** The fourth day of July, the day on which the Congress of the United States renounced their subjection to Great Britain, and declared their independence.

**INDEPENDENT FORTUNE.** A fortune which renders one independent; as, "Mr. Girard, by his industry and ability, accumulated an *independent fortune*."

**INDIAN BED.** An *Indian bed* of clams is made by setting a number of clams together on the ground with the hinge uppermost, and then kindling over them a fire of brushwood, which is kept burning till they are thoroughly roasted. This is the best way of roasting clams, and is often practised by picnic parties. See *Clambake*.

**INDIAN BREAD.** Bread or cake made of the meal of Indian corn or maize; also called Johnny cake.

If I don't make a johnny cake every day, Rier says, "Ma, why don't you make some *Indian bread*?" — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 70.

**INDIAN CORN.** Maize; so called because cultivated by the aborigines.

**INDIAN CORN-HILLS.** A term given to hillocks covering broad fields near

the ancient mounds and earthworks of Ohio, Wisconsin, etc. They are without order or arrangement, being scattered over the surface with the utmost irregularity. That these mammillary elevations were formed in the manner indicated by their name, is inferred from the present custom of the Indians. The corn is planted in the same spot each successive year, and the soil is gradually brought up to the size of a little hill by the annual additions. — *Lapham's Antiquities of Wisconsin, Smithsonian Contributions.*

These antique *corn-hills* were unusually large, and were, as the Iroquois informed me, three or four times the diameter of modern hills, a size which resulted from the want of a plough — *Schoolcraft's Indian Tribes*, Vol. I. p. 57

INDIAN CURRENT. See *Coral Berry*.

INDIAN FIG. The fruit of a gigantic plant (*Cereus giganteus*) of the Cactus family, known among the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona as the Pitahaya, the fruit of which resembles the fig in taste. — *Bartlett's Pers. Narrative*, Vol. II. p. 189.

INDIAN FILE. Single file; the usual way in which the Indians traverse the woods or march to battle, one following after and treading in the footsteps of the other.

Magua arose and gave the signal to proceed, marching himself in advance. They followed their leader singly, and in that well-known order which has obtained the distinguishing appellation of *Indian file* — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*

INDIAN GIFT. A term proverbially applied to any thing reclaimed after being given.

INDIAN GIVER. When an Indian gives any thing, he expects to receive an equivalent, or to have his gift returned. This term is applied by children to a child who, after having given away a thing, wishes to have it back again.

INDIAN HEMP. (*Apocynum cannabinum*.) A medicinal plant.

INDIAN LADDER. A ladder made of a small tree by trimming it so as to leave only a few inches of each branch as a support for the foot. Southern.

Having provided ourselves with a long snagged sapling, called an *Indian ladder*, we descended safely to the bottom of the grotto. — *Bartram's Florida*, p. 247.

INDIAN LIQUOR. Whiskey adulterated for sale to the Indians.

A citizen of St. Paul furnishes some pretty hard papers on his fellow sinners who trade with the North-Western Indians. He says a barrel of the "pure Cincinnati," even after it has run the gauntlet of railroad and lake travel, is a sufficient basis upon which to manufacture one hundred barrels of "good *Indian liquor*!" He says a small bucketful of the Cincinnati article is poured into a wash-tub almost full

of rain water; a large quantity of "dog-leg" tobacco and red pepper is then thrown into the tub; a bitter species of root, common in "the land of the Dakota," is then cut up and added; burnt sugar or some such article is used to restore something like the original color of the whiskey. The compound has to be kept on hand a few days before it is fit for use. It is then administered to the aborigines *ad libitum*. *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 10, 1858.

**INDIAN MEAL.** Meal made from Indian corn. A mixture of the flour of wheat and maize is called *wheat and Indian*.

**INDIAN ORCHARD.** An old orchard of ungrafted apple-trees, the time of planting being unknown. New York.

**INDIAN PEACHES.** Ungrafted peach-trees, which are considered to be more thrifty and to bear larger fruit than the others.

**INDIAN PHYSIC.** See *Bowman's Root*.

**INDIAN PIPE.** See *Wax Plant*.

**INDIAN PUDDING.** A pudding, the chief ingredients of which are Indian meal and molasses.

As to grandmother's *Indian puddings* — alas! I shall never see their like again. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 371.

**INDIAN RESERVATION OR RESERVE.** A tract of land reserved for the use of Indians.

**INDIAN SIGN.** Signs of the recent presence of Indians in the wilderness. See *Sign*.

**INDIAN SUMMER.** A writer in the *National Intelligencer* for November 26, 1857, has the following remarks on this topic:—"The short season of pleasant weather usually occurring about the middle of November, is called the *Indian Summer*, from the custom of the Indians to avail themselves of this delightful time for harvesting their corn; and the tradition is that they were accustomed to say 'they always had a second summer of nine days just before the winter set in.' It is a bland and genial time, in which the birds, insects, and plants feel a new creation, and sport a short-lived summer ere they shrink finally from the rigor of the winter's blast. The sky in the mean time is generally filled with a haze of orange and gold intercepting the direct rays of the sun, yet possessing enough of light and heat to prevent sensations of gloom or chill, while the nights grow sharp and frosty, and the necessary fires give cheerful forecast of the social winter evenings near at hand.

"This season is synonymous with the 'Summer of St. Martin' of Europe, which derives its name from the festival of St. Martin, held on the 11th of November. Shakspeare alludes to it in the first part of *Henry IV.* :

'Farewell thou latter spring !  
Farewell all hallown summer !'

"And more expressively in the first part of Henry VI. :

'This night the siege assuredly I'll raise ;  
Expect St. Martin's summer, halcyon days.'"

INDIAN TOBACCO. (*Lobelia inflata*.) A plant whose leaves contain a poisonous, white, viscid juice, of an acrid taste.

INDIAN TURNIP. 1. (*Arum triphyllum*.) The root of an acrid and powerful poison when fresh.

2. (*Psoralea esculenta*.) A common root in the West, much used by the Sioux Indians as food. It is also called Pomme Blanche and Pomme de Prairie.

INDIANS. The name improperly given by early navigators to the aborigines of America, in the belief that the country they inhabited was the eastern portion of India, a name then applied to far eastern Asia. The Spaniards, until within the present century, applied the name of "India" and "Indies" to their possessions in America; and even now, it is said that in Seville, the department or office where the business of America is transacted, and which in England would be called the "Colonial Office," is known as the "India House."

INDIGNATION MEETING. A public meeting called by a political or other party, for the purpose of devising means to correct an alleged or real public abuse.

Instead of those *indignation meetings* set on foot in the time of William the Testy, where men met together to rail at public abuses, groan over the evils of the times, and make each other miserable, there were joyous meetings of the two sexes to dance and make merry. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

The public looked chiefly to the press for advice and information as to their rights and duties, and had resolved that it should not be gagged and put down by "illegal orders, attachments, fines and imprisonments for imaginary contempts against courts which cannot be reduced much lower than they have reduced themselves." So said the resolutions of the *indignation meeting* of the 9th March, 1851; and this language was generally applauded. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 324.

INFAIR. The "reception" party or entertainment of a newly married couple. West and South.

The *infair*, or wedding supper, was all ready, we were marshalled to our seats; and a most sumptuous feast it was. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 59.

TO ENHEAVEN. A word invented by the Boston transcendentalists.

The one circumflows and *inheavens* us. The infinite Father bears us in his bosom, shepherd and flock. — *Margaret*, p. 412.

**INSTITUTION.** A flash word of recent introduction as applied to any prevalent practice or thing.

The driving of vehicles is a great *institution* among us, and may be safely said to constitute almost the only out-door amusement of the majority of our male population. The ambition of every fast man, young or old, is to possess a wagon with one or two trotting horses attached — *N. Y. Herald*.

Garroting, as an *institution*, may be said to be almost extinct in New York. It went out of fashion in a desperate hurry immediately after a sensible judge sentenced three garroters to the state prison, one for life, the others for twenty-one years each. — *Tricks and Traps of New York*, p. 47.

Whatever small thinkers and small actors may attempt, woman cannot be counted out and classified as a mere appendage. She is an *institution*, and hereafter must receive the most generous culture and recognition, if man and society are ever to be more than they have been in times past. — *H. L. Stuart*, in *N. Y. Tribune*, Aug. 11, 1858.

A very unwholesome object, the carcass of a large dog, has been suffered to lie in Ninth street, near D, since Tuesday, although most abominably offensive and unhealthy. A similar *institution* has occupied a site on the commons for some time past, filling the air with noxious odors. — (*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, July, 1858.

From the following example, it appears that this use, or rather abuse, of the word, is not confined to this country :

The camels form an *institution* of India, — possibly a part of the traditional policy, and they must be respected accordingly. — *London Times Cor. from India*, April, 1858.

**TO INTERFERE.** “He *interfered* with me,” in the West, generally implies rough usage.

**INTERVAL, or INTERVALE.** Low or alluvial land on the margins of rivers ; so called in New England. Similar land is called, in the Western States, “bottom land.” — *Worcester*.

The *interval* intended in New England geography is the interval or space between a river and the mountains, which on both sides uniformly accompany its course at a greater or less distance from its margin. Hence *interval* lands include meadow and uplands, and in general the whole of the narrow valley through which, in these regions, the rivers flow. — *Kendall's Travels*, Vol. III. p. 183.

**IRISH.** Temper, anger. Col. Dick Johnson, of Tecumseh reputation, used this Western substantive in one of his Eastern speeches : “My friends say that my *Irish* is getting up,” meaning, I am getting angry.

**IRISH POTATO.** A term used throughout the country to distinguish the common (*Solanum tuberosum*) from the sweet potato (*Convolvulus batatas*).

**IS.** Some American grammarians condemn such expressions as “He *is* come, arrived, returned, gone ; *was* come,” etc., universal in England and occurring everywhere, in the Bible and the best writers. No Englishman would say “the boat has gone,” “has come ;” he would say “he

has gone to London many a time," — "he has come several miles to no purpose," — "he has returned by a different road."

The difference in meaning is obvious, and contributes to enrich the language. In the former expression *gone*, arrived, etc., are real participial adjectives, expressing a permanent state; in the latter they are verbs.

**IRON WEED.** (*Vernonia noveboracensis*.) A plant, called in the North-eastern States Flat Top, almost the only tall weed found in the beautiful "woods pastures" of Kentucky and Tennessee. Western.

**ISABELLA GRAPE.** A cultivated grape of *Vitis labrusca*, not much esteemed for its wine producing qualities, but grown for table use.

**ISLAND.** In prairie regions, the same terms are used as if the timber were land, and the prairie water. A cluster of trees is called an *island*, sometimes a *mot*, — a small strip of prairie running into a wood, a *cove*, and a larger one, a *bay*.

The soil of the prairies is deep and rich; but, being of a clayey nature, retains the water after heavy rains, so as to appear flooded. In some are little clumps of trees on higher ground, which are called *islands*. — *Harris, Journal of a Tour*, etc., p. 178.

At the summit of the hill is a beautiful grove, or *island* of timber, where the heroes that fell at the battle of San Jacinto sleep their last sleep. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 252.

**ITEM.** Information; as "I got *item* of his being in town." This word is used among Southern gamblers to imply information of what cards may be in their partner's or opponent's hands; this is called "giving *item*."

Keep your eyes skinned and your rifles clean, and the minit yer get *item* that I'm back, set off for the cross roads, etc. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

## J.

**TO JAB.** To strike or thrust; as, "he *jabbed* a knife into me."

**JACAL.** (Span., pron. *hacal*; from the Mexican *xacalli*, a straw hut.) A house built of erect stakes, with their interstices filled with mud. They are common in Texas and in new Spanish settlements.

The modern village of Goliad is composed of about twenty *jacals*, large, and of a comparatively comfortable character, scattered over two hills. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 262.

**JACKASS RABBIT.** (*Lepus callotis*.) A rabbit, found on the high plains of Texas and near the Rocky Mountains, so called from its very long ears and long and slender legs. It is known also by the names of Mule Rabbit, Texan Hare, and Black-tailed Hare,



Our conversation was cut short by a *jackass-rabbit* bounding from under our horses' feet. — *Audubon's Quadrupeds of North America*, Vol. II. p. 95.

The *jackass-rabbit* crossed our path occasionally; but it sprang up so suddenly, and darted through the low bushes or chapparal so rapidly, that I could not get a shot at onc. — *Bartlett's New Mexico*, Vol. I. p. 76.

**JACK-AT-A-PINCH.** As a last resort.

The fact is, Miss Coon feels wonderfully cut up, because she knows that her husband took her *Jack-at-a-pinch*. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 27.

**JAG.** A parcel or load. — *Halliwel*. And so in New England.

As there was very little money in the country, the bank bought a good *jag* on't in Europe. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 168.

**JAM UP.** A slang expression, equivalent to the English "slap up," "bang up," i. e. capital, prime.

There must have been a charming climate in Paradise. The temperature was perfect, and connubial bliss, I allot, was real *jam up*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 273.

**JAMAICA PEPPER.** See *Allspice*.

**JAMESTOWN WEED.** (Pron. *Jimson weed*.) The Thorn Apple (*Datura stramonium*). Its Northern name is Stinkweed. It is said to have been introduced from tropical America, and to have been first observed about Jamestown, Virginia, where it sprang up on heaps of ballast and other rubbish discharged from vessels; whence its Southern name.

The *Jamestown weed* is one of the greatest coolers in the world. It, being an early plant, was gathered very young for a boiled salad by some of the soldiers, to pacify the troubles of bacon, and some of them eat plentifully of it, the effect of which was a very pleasant comedy; for they turned natural fools upon it for several days. — *Beverly, Hist. of Virginia*, Book II.

The *Jamestown weed* is excellent for curing burns and assuaging inflammations; but taken inwardly brings on a sort of drunken madness — *Lawson's Carolina*, 1718, p. 78.

"George, did you ever see Sicily Burns?" "Yes, a very handsome girl." "Handsome! this wurd don't kiver the case. She shows among wimen like a sunflower as compared to dog-fennel, an smart weed, and *jimsen*." — *Sut Luvengood's Experience*.

**JAPONICADOM.** A word invented by N. P. Willis to denote the upper classes of society.

**TO JEOPARDIZE.** To expose to loss or injury. — *Webster*. This word is often seen in the debates of Congress, as they are reported in the newspapers. It is doubtless a corruption of the ancient verb to *jeopard*, as *deputize* is of *depute*. — *Pickering*. The word is much used in the United States, and less frequently in England.

The profound respect for the cause of truth which led Mr. Tooke not to *jeopardize* its interests by any hasty assumption of its name and pretensions for a discovery yet incomplete, constitutes one of his surest holds upon posterity. — *London Athenæum*, March 18, 1848.

A horse, with a wagon attached, took fright yesterday afternoon in York street, and started off at full speed, *jeopardizing* the lives and limbs of pedestrians. One female, with a child in her arms, narrowly escaped being knocked down and run over. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

**JERKS, and JERKING EXERCISE.** The paroxysms into which certain religious enthusiasts fell at their camp-meetings in the West, though chiefly in Kentucky and Tennessee. It consisted in being jerked in all directions, and over whatever object happened to be in the way. In these cases, the persons affected would be left to themselves, because the people said, that, to oppose them, would be to resist the influences of the Spirit of God.

**JESSIE.** "To give one Jessie," means to give him a flogging.

Well, hoss, you've slashed the hide off 'er that feller, touched his raw, and rumbled his feathers—that's the way to *give him jessy*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 33.

The preacher went in for *giving Jessie* to the Church of Rome. — *Doesticks*, p. 105.

It is represented that a great many people from Salt Lake have been met, and they all say that the Mormons are going to *give us Jessie*. — *St. Louis Republican*, 1857.

The Judge [who was a candidate for office] had to stay at a convenient distance to hear that Hoss Allen was giving him *particular Jesse*. — *Hoss Allen's Apology*.

**TO JEW.** To cheat. To *Jew* a person, is considered, in Western parlance, a shade worse than to "Yankee" him.

**JEWILLIKENS!** A Western exclamation of surprise.

Didn't you know that feller, Arch Cooney? He was a hoss-fly. He's a few! well he is. *Jewhilliken*, how he could whip a nigger! and swear! whew! — *Traits of American Humor*.

**TO JIBE.** To suit, agree, harmonize. A variation of *to gee*, which last is used both in England and in this country.

I attempted to sing the words of "Old Hundred," while the lady played the Jenny Lind Polka, which did n't seem to *jibe*. — *Doesticks*, p. 113.

**JIG.** An artificial squid for trolling. New England.

"A school of blue-fish!" exclaimed the Professor, as his eye caught the movement to which I pointed. He shouted frantically to the pilot to make haste with the dory, and, throwing on an overcoat, seized from the locker where we kept our fishing tackle a long, stout line, at the end of which was a shining, spoon-shaped piece of pewter, terminated by a large hook. This apparatus he called a *jig*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 22, 1858.

**THE JIG IS UP**, i. e. the game is up; it is all over with me.

The time was when I could cut pigeon wings and perform the double shuffle with precision and activity; but those days are over now — *the jig is up*. — *Kendall, Santa Fe Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 62.

**JIGAMAREE**. A trivial or nonsensical thing. A factitious word, equivalent to "jiggumbob" and "thingumbob." It is explained in the English glossaries to mean a manœuvre, a trick.

He is also the inventor of the "housekeeper's friend," that ere *jigamaree* the wimmin scrubs with, instead of going on their hands and knees as they used to. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I went over t'other night to see them all, as they was as busy as bees in a tar barrel sowin' and makin' up finery. Mary was sowin' something mighty fine with ruffles and *jigamarees* all around it. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**JIGGER**. 1. See *Chi'goe*.

2. A small fishing vessel. New England.

**JIGGLING-BOARD**. A board the ends of which are placed upon frames or stools, upon which a person stands and springs up — also called a *jolly-board*.

**JOHNNY-CAKE**. A cake made of Indian meal mixed with milk or water. A New England *Johnny-cake* is invariably spread upon the stave of a barrel-top, and baked before the fire. Sometimes stewed pumpkin is mixed with it.

Some talk of hoe-cake, fair Virginia's pride;  
Rich *Johnny-cake* this mouth has often tried.  
Both please me well, their virtues much the same;  
Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,  
Except in dear New England, where the last  
Receives a dash of pumpkin in the paste.

*Joel Barlow, Poem on Hasty Pudding.*

**JOHNNY JUMP UP AND KISS ME**. **JOHNNY JUMP UP**. **JOHNNY JUMPER**. Names given to the Heart's Ease, or Violet. This name is also given to the breastbone of a goose, with its two ends brought together by a twisted string held by a stick passing through it and stuck fast at the end by a piece of wax.

**JORNADA**. (Spanish.) A march or journey performed in a day. In the interior it is only applied to a long reach of desert country without water, and not to a day's journey; as the "*Jornada del Muerto*" in New Mexico, which is ninety miles across, and which it takes several days to traverse.

If experiments with Artesian wells should prove successful, the progress of agriculture in New Mexico would be more rapid, and even many dreaded *jornadas* might be changed from waterless deserts into cultivated plains. — *Wislizenus, New Mexico*.

Until the autumn of 1849, the California desert was found to be a sandy and dreary *jornada*, without water or grass. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations, R. R. Survey.*

**JOSEY.** A loose, light upper garment, with sleeves and a short skirt, now worn by women and girls. Both the dress and the name are contractions of the old-fashioned *Joseph*.

**JOUR, or JUR.** An abbreviation of the word *journeyman*. "The boss quarrelled with the *jurs*," i. e. the master quarrelled with his journey-men.

**JUBA.** One of the classical names often given to negroes by their masters. "Clapping *Juba*" is keeping time by striking the feet on the floor and clapping the hands on the legs to the music of the banjo. It adds much to the excitement of the rustic dances at the South.

Here we saw rare sport! Here were Virginia slaves, dancing jigs and clapping *Juber*, over a barrel of persimmon beer, to the notes of the banjo. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 98.

*Juber* up and *Juber* down,  
*Juber* all around de town,  
*Juber* dis and *Juber* dat,  
 And *Juber* round de simmon vat.  
 Hoe corn and hill tobacco,  
 Get over double trouble, *Juber* boys, *Juber*! — *Ibid.* p. 101.

**JUDAS TREE.** See *Red Bud*.

**JUDGES OF THE PLAINS.** A translation of the Spanish *Jueces del Campo*. In California there are, by law, appointed certain persons in every county, whose duty it is to attend all the rodeos, or gatherings of cattle, whether for the purpose of marking or branding, or for separating the cattle, when called upon by any ranchero, farmer, or owner of stock. These are called *Judges of the Plains*, and have the power to decide all disputes connected with the ownership of horses, mules, or horned cattle. — *Laws of California*. See *Rodeo*.

**JUDICIARY.** The judiciary power, or the power that administers justice; judicature. — *Judge Story*. This word is often used as a substantive in the United States; but is not often so used in England. — *Worcester*.

**JUDY.** "To make a *judy* of one's self" is what, with more vigor than politeness, is termed making an ass of one's self.

The Boston Chronotype, in speaking of the bad management and confusion at the Water celebration, says:

It is thought that a set of men never did make greater *Judies* of themselves.

**JUGFULL.** "Not by a *jugfull*," is a phrase commonly used to mean, not by a great deal, by no means.

Downingville is as sweet as a rose. But 'taint so in New York, not by a *jugfull*. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

He wished to state of the pro-slavery men of Kansas, so that their friends in Missouri might see into their plans and policy, they had not abandoned the idea of making Kansas a slave State, by a *jugfull*. — *P. T. Able's Speech*, July, 1857.

**JULEP.** A drink, composed of brandy or whiskey with sugar, pounded ice, and some sprigs of mint.

Hoffman brings the gods together on Mount Olympus, after their last butt of nectar had run out, to taste mint juleps:

The draught was delicious, each god did exclaim,  
Though something yet wanting they all did bewail;  
But *juleps* the drink of immortals became,  
When Jove himself added a handful of hail.

**JUMP.** "From the *jump*" is a phrase meaning, from the start, from the beginning.

Here is a whole string of Democrats, all of whom had been going the whole hog for Cass *from the jump*, without regard to our adherence or opposition to Taylor. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 11, 1848.

**TO JUMP A CLAIM**, in Western parlance, is to endeavor to obtain possession of the land or "claim" which has been taken up and occupied by a settler, or "squatter," in a new country. The first occupant is, by squatter law and custom, entitled to the first claim on the land. Sometimes dishonest men attempt to deprive the squatter of his rights, which often leads to bloodshed.

If a man *jumped* my *claim*, and encroached on my boundaries, and I did n't knock him on the head with a pickaxe, I appealed to the crowd, and, my claim being carefully measured and found correct, the *juniper* would be ordered to confine himself to his own territory. — *F. Marryat, Mountains and Molehills*, p. 217.

At Florence, Nebraska Territory, on the 26th of May, seven men were arrested by a mob, for what is called *claim jumping* — that is, settling down on sections of land already entered or claimed by other persons. They were tried by a club association, and condemned to death by hanging; but the urgent entreaties of their families averted the execution of the infamous sentence. — *Boston Traveller*.

**JUMPER.** 1. One who takes a squatter's claim.

2. A couple of hickory poles so bent that the runners and shafts are of the same piece, with a crate placed on four props, complete this primitive species of sledge; and when the crate is filled with hay, and the driver well wrapped in a buffalo robe, the "turn out" is about as comfortable a one as a man could wish. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 200.

**JUNK-BOTTLE.** The ordinary black glass porter bottle.

## K.

**KAMAS ROOT.** (*Camassia esculenta*). Breadroot. The Pomme des Prairies or Pomme Blanche of the Canadians, and Prairie Turnip of the hunters and trappers of the West. It is very extensively used as food by the Digger Indians.

**KANACKA.** A native of the Sandwich Islands. *Kanaka* is the Sandwich Island word for "man." California.

**KANTICOY.** See *Canticoy*.

**KARIMPTION.** A squad. Western.

A whole *karimption* of Dutch emigrants were landed here yesterday. — *Cairo, Illinois, Times*.

**KATOWSE.** (Germ. *Getöse*.) A din, tumult, rumpus; as, "What a *katowse* you are making!" New England.

**KATYDID.** (*Platyphyllum concavum*.) The popular name of a species of grasshopper; so called from its peculiar note. Two of them will chirp alternately from different trees, one saying, *Katy did!* and the other replying with equal positiveness, *Katy did n't!* At least, so their conversation is interpreted by the children.

I sit among the leaves here,  
When evening zephyrs sigh,  
And those that listen to my voice  
I love to mystify.  
I never tell them all I know,  
Altho' I'm often hid,  
I laugh at curiosity,  
And chirrup *Katy did*. — *Ethiopian Songs*.

I love to hear thine earnest voice,  
Wherever thou art hid,  
Thou testy little dogmatist,  
Thou pretty *Katydid*. — *O. W. Holmes' Poems*.

Nature was fast asleep, and not a sound interrupted the solemn stillness, save the pitiful plaint of a lovelorn *Katydid*, or an occasional yawl from some sacrilegious cat. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**KAY, CAY, KEY.** (Span. *cayo*.) A small island or rock in the sea. The term is generally applied to those on the Florida coast.

**KECHUG! or KERCHUG!** Whop! The noise made by popping into the water. See the observations on interjections of this sort under *Cachunk*. A modern poet, in speaking of the plunge of a frog, thus makes use of the word:

You see him sitting on a log  
 Above the vasty deep ;  
 You feel inclined to say, " Old Chap,  
 Just look before you leap ! " "  
 You raise your cane to hit him on  
 His ugly looking mug,  
 But ere you get it half way up,  
 Adown he goes — *kerchug* !

**KEDGE.** Brisk ; in good health and spirits. **Ex.** " How do you do to-day ? " " I am pretty *ledge*." It is used only in a few of the country towns of New England. — *Pickering*. Provincial in England.

**KEEL-BOAT.** A description of vessel formerly used on the Mississippi and its tributaries. It is thus described by Flint: " The *keel-boat* is of a long, slender, and elegant form, and generally carries from fifteen to thirty tons. Its advantage is in its small draft of water, and the lightness of its construction. It is still used [1832] on the Ohio and Upper Mississippi in low stages of water, and on all the boatable streams where steamboats do not yet run. Its propelling power is by oars, sails, setting poles, the cordelle, and, when the waters are high and the boat runs on the margin of the bushes, 'bush-whacking,' or pulling up by the bushes." — *History and Geography of Mississippi Valley*.

**TO KEEL OVER.** A nautical phrase, meaning to capsize or upset, and metaphorically applied to a sudden prostration.

As it seems pretty evident that the sovereigns of Europe, instead of occupying or sharing thrones, are predestined to the walks of private life, it would be highly proper to cultivate in them a spirit of self-abnegation and humility. If the royal parents wish to see their offspring " let down easy " from their high estate, they will adopt this course. *Keel over* they must, and a gradual *careen* would be much better than a sudden *capsize*. Now that the people are assuming the rights and privileges of sovereignty, we trust that they will have some consideration for princes in distress. — *N. Y. Sunday Despatch*.

**TO KEEL UP.** To turn bottom up. A seaman's phrase, like the preceding.

When we get *keeled up*, that will be the last of us. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 116.

**KEENER.** A very shrewd person, one sharp at a bargain, what in England would be called " a keen hand." Western.

**KEEP.** Food, subsistence, keeping. In a letter to his brother, Bishop Heber, speaking of Bishops' College costing so much, says :

Besides, it has turned out so expensive in the monthly bills and necessary *keep* of its inmates, that my resources, etc. — Vol. II. p. 319.

The cottager either purchased hay for the *keep* [of the cow], or paid for her run in the straw-yard. — *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. LXI. p. 245.

"They tell me you puritans preach by instinct."

"I don't know how that is," answered Gershom. "I heer'n tell, across at Bois Bruly, of sich doin's, and would give you a week's *keep* at Whuskey Centre to know how 't was done." — *Cooper. The Oak Openings.*

**TO KEEP.** The phrase *to keep shop* is often shortened into *to keep*; as, "where do you *keep* now?" i. e., where is your place of business? *To keep* also has the sense of to live, to dwell, which use of the word is provincial in the eastern counties of England.

**KEEP THE POT A BOILING**, i. e. Don't let the game flag. A common expression among young people, when they are anxious to carry on their gambols with spirit. — *Brockett's North Country Words.*

**TO KEEP A STIFF UPPER LIP** is to continue firm, keep up one's courage.

"My friend," said he, "don't cry for spilt milk; *keep a stiff upper lip*; all will come out right enough yet." — *Knickerbocker Magazine*, Vol. XXV.

Tut, tut, Major; *keep a stiff upper lip*, and you 'll bring him this time. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 150

**TO KEEP COMPANY.** To court. A common term applied to a man whose visits to a lady are frequent, with the intention of gaining her hand. "He *keeps company* with her," i. e. he is courting her; or "They are *keeping company*," i. e. are courting.

A young tailorress got a verdict against Mr. B——, a steady farmer, who "*kept company*" with her some months, and appointed a day for the wedding. [But subsequently changed his mind.] — *New York Commercial Advertiser.*

"I had no idee that Sally Smith was goin' to be married to Sam Pendergrass," said the Widow Bedott. "She'd been *keepin' company* with Mose Hewlett for better'n a year, and everybody said that was a settled thing." — *Bedott Papers*, p. 22.

**KEEPING-ROOM.** A common sitting-room; the parlor, in New England. The term is chiefly used in the interior, although it may sometimes be heard in the seaport towns. The same expression is used in Norfolk, England, for "the general sitting-room of the family, or common parlor." — *Forby's Norf. Glossary.*

Mr. Goodrich, in speaking of the period of his boyhood in Connecticut, says:

Carpets were then only known in a few families, and were confined to the *keeping-room* and parlor. — *Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 74.

Within there was but the kitchen, the *keeping-room*, and a pantry, together with the sleeping apartment. — *Eastford.*

**KEET.** See *Guinea Keet.*

**KELUMPS!** Thump! The noise produced by a fall on a hard body.



Only think; a fellow to come here drunk at night, and to fall *kalumpus* on the fence by the apple-tree! — *Adv. of Priest*, p. 93.

**KENTUCKY COFFEE.** The fruit of the *Gynonoclares canadensis*. A large tree, resembling the locust tree, bearing a pod with berries which are used for coffee.

**KENTUCKY FLAT.** See *Flat-boat*.

**KESHAW!** See *Cashaw!*

**KESLOSH! KESWOSH! KEWOSH!** Plash! splash! The noise produced by a body falling flat into the water.

Cousin Peter sat down between them [the king and queen in a play]; but they riz up jest as he went to sit down, and the first thing he knowed, *kerslosh* he went into a tub of water. — *Major Jones's Courtship*

The kiver-hinge pin bein' lost, tea leaves and tea and kiver

Would all come down *kerswosh!* as though the dam broke in a river.

*Poetical Epistle from a Volunteer.*

I have seen manhood fall from the topmost cliff of ambition *kerswosh* into the depths of nonentity, and lie forever buried in the turbid waves of oblivion. — *Dow's Sermons*.

He shoved away the boat, and the first thing I know'd down I went *kerwash* into the drink. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 36.

**KESOUSE! Souse!** The noise made by a body falling from a small height into the water.

The dugout had n't leaped more 'n six lengths from the bank, afore — zip — chng — *ke-souse* I went; the cend lifted agin a sawyer, and emptied me into the element. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

**TO KESOUSE.** To souse into the water.

I *kasoused* the old cock into a bucket of boilin' water, and — do you believe? Why it took two of my young ones and a big pair of pincers a whole day to get the critter's feathers out. — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

**KESWOLLOP! Flop!** The noise made by a violent fall to the ground.

The horses kept pretty even till they reached the third fence, a regular snag; and then *kerswollop* went one rider clear over the horse's head. — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

**KEY.** See *Kay*.

**KEYSTONE STATE.** The State of Pennsylvania. So called from its being the central State of the Union at the time of the formation of the Constitution.

**KIBLINGS.** Parts of small fish used by fishermen for bait on the banks of Newfoundland.

**TO KICK.** To jilt. Ex. "Miss A has *kicked* the Hon. Mr. B, and sent him off with a flea in his ear." Confined to the South.

**KICK.** *To kick up a row* is to create a disturbance; the same as to *kick up a dust*.

Mr. Polk admitted Santa Anna, because he knew him to be capable of fighting nothing but chickens, and *to kick up a row* in Mexico, and disconcert government measures. — *Mr. Bedinger, Speech in House of Representatives.*

**KID.** A large box in fishing vessels, into which fish are thrown as they are caught. New England.

**TO KILL.** To defeat, to neutralize. A political term. "Do you vote the Whig ticket? I'll go the Democrat and *kill* your vote." "Ike Sap got a divorce from his old woman in the House, but it was *killed* in the Senate."

**TO KILL.** To do a thing *to kill* is a common vulgarism, and means to do it to the uttermost, to carry it to the fullest extent; as, "He drives *to kill*;" "She dances *to kill*."

**KILL.** (Dutch *kil*.) A channel, or arm of the sea; a stream, river. This Dutch appellation is still preserved in several instances; thus the channel that separates Staten Island from Bergen Neck is called *Kill van Kull*, or simply the *Kills*; to which we may add the names *Schuyt-kill* and *Catskill*, applied to streams.

**KILLDEER.** (*Charadrius vociferus*.) A small bird of the plover kind; so called from its peculiar note.

**KILLHAG.** (Indian.) A wooden trap, used by the hunters in Maine.

**KILLING-TIME.** The season when hogs are slaughtered.

**KILLOCK.** A small anchor.

They took their berths, unshipped their oars, threw over their *killcks* and prepared for fishing — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman.*

So I advise the num'rous friends that 's in one boat with me

To jest up *killock*, jam right down their helm hard a lea.

*The Biglow Papers.*

**KILLY-FISH, or KILLY.** (Genus *Fundulus*.) A small fish found in the salt water creeks and bays, from one to five inches in length. It is only used for bait for larger fish. They are so called from the "*Kills*" in which they abound.

**KINDLERS, or KINDLINGS.** Small pieces of wood for kindling a fire; kindling-wood. New England.

Put some *kindlers* under the pot, and then you may go. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

Mr. Goodrich, in describing the wood fires of olden time in New England, says :

There was a back-log, top-log, middle stick, and then a heap of *kundlings*, reaching from the bowels down to the bottom.

**KIND O', KINDER.** In a manner, as it were ; as, "She made game on it *kind o'.*" — *Forby.*

A *kinder* notion just then began to get into my head. — *Major Downing.*

At that the landlord and officer looked *kinder* thunderstruck. — *Downing.*

It *kinder* seemed to me that something could be done, and they let me take the colt. — *Margaret*, p. 325.

In the store that stands above us,  
As I sat beneath the counter,  
*Kind-a* doing nothing, only  
Nibbling at a box of raisins.

*Ward, Song of Higher Water.*

**KINDER SORTER.** Somehow, rather.

I have set my heart on a gall, though whether she will give me hern, I ain't sartin ; but I rather *kinder sorter* guess so, than *kinder sorter* not so. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 90.

**KING-BIRD.** (*Muscicapa tyrannus.*) A bold and sprightly bird which appears in Louisiana about the middle of March, and continues until the middle of September. Further northward, over the entire country, it comes later and disappears earlier. — *R. Kennicott.*

**KING-CRAB.** See *Horse-Foot.*

**KING-FISH.** (*Umbrina alburnus.*) A sea-fish of delicious flavor, called King-fish about New York, and Hake on the Jersey coast.

**KINK.** An accidental knot or sudden twist in a rope, thread, etc. ; and, figuratively, a fanciful notion, a crotchety.

"It is useless to persuade him to go, for he has taken a *kink* in his head that he will not." — *Carlton, The New Purchase.*

I went down to Macon to the examination, whar I got a heap of new *kinks.* — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 20.

Never a Yankee was born or bred  
Without that peculiar *kink* in his head  
By which he could turn the smallest amount  
Of whatever he had to the best account.

*Cozzin, California Ballad.*

**KINKY.** Queer, eccentric, crotchety.

**KINNIKINNICK.** An Indian word for a preparation of tobacco, sumac leaves, and willow twigs, two thirds tobacco and one of the latter gathered when the leaves commence turning red. This mixture is used by the Indians and the old settlers and hunters in the West.

At this moment the Indians were in deliberation. Seated in a large circle round a very small fire, the smoke from which ascended in a thin straight column, they each in turn puffed a huge cloud of smoke from three or four long cherry-stemmed pipes, which went the round of the party; each warrior touching the ground with the heel of the pipe bowl, and turning the stem upwards and away from him as "medicine" to the Great Spirit, before he himself inhaled the fragrant *kinnik-kinnik*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I at this moment presented to the Duke the Indian pipe, through which he had smoked the day before, and also an Indian tobacco-pouch, filled with the *k'nick-k'neck* (or Indian tobacco) with which he had been so much pleased, — *Catlin's Travels in Europe*.

There are also certain creeks where the Indians resort to lay in a store of *kinnik-kinnik*, the inner bark of the red willow, which they use as a substitute for tobacco, and which has an aromatic and very pungent flavor. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 116.

While I am writing, I am smoking a pipe filled with *kinnikinick*, the dried leaves of the red sumac — a very good substitute for tobacco. — *Carvalho, Adventures in the Far West*, p. 36.

**KISKITOMAS NUT.** A name of the hickory nut, doubtless of Indian origin. The following sonnet to it is taken from the *Literary World* of Nov. 2, 1850:

Hickory, shell-bark, *kuskitomas* nut!  
 Or whatsoever thou art called, thy praise  
 Has ne'er been sounded yet in poet's lays.  
 October's frosts now burst the husk where shut  
 In snug recluse thou 'st passed the summer; but  
 Ushered at length into the world's broad blaze,  
 Lo! throngs of merry children rush to raise  
 Thy form, and give thee welcome every hut  
 And stateful dwelling hails thy glad approach;  
 Looking, when winter's snows and sleets encroach,  
 To gather social circles round the hearth;  
 Who, while the generous cider-cask they broach,  
 And munching apples laud their various worth,  
 Call in thine aid to crown with crackling noise the mirth.

**KISS-ME-QUICK.** A home-made, quilted bonnet which does not extend beyond the face. They are chiefly used to cover the head by ladies when going to parties or to the theatre.

She holds out with each hand a portion of her silk dress, as if she was walking a minuet, and it discloses a snow white petticoat. Her step is short and mincing, and she wears a new bonnet called a *kiss-me-quick*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 131.

**KITCHEN CABINET.** A nickname applied to certain advisers of President Jackson.

In the management of the *Washington Globe*, the organ of the President, it became necessary for him to consult often with Blair and Kendall, which was a reason, among others, for the Whig party to ridicule and condemn "Jackson's kitchen cabinet." — *Life and Times of Governor Reynolds*, p. 453.

**KITE-FLIER.** A financier who practises the operation of "*kite-flying*."

**KITE-FLYING.** An expression well-known to mercantile men of limited means, or who are short of cash. It is a combination between two persons, neither of whom has any funds in bank, to exchange each other's checks, which may be deposited in lieu of money, taking good care to make their bank accounts good before their checks are presented for payment. *Kite-flying* is also practised by mercantile houses or persons in different cities. A house in Boston draws on a house in New York at sixty days or more, and gets its bill discounted. The New York house, in return, meets its acceptance by re-drawing on the Boston house. Immense sums of money are often raised in this manner — in fact, furnishing a capital for both houses to transact their business with.

*Flying the kite* is rather a perilous adventure, and subjects a man to a risk of detection. One who values his credit as a sound and fair dealer would by no means hazard it. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 82.

It appears that Yankeeland cannot claim the honor of inventing either the practice or the phrase; for at a legal dinner in Ireland, Lord Norbury said to Chancellor Milford:

In England you have to raise a wind to fly a kite, but in Ireland here we *fly kites* to raise the wind.

**KNEE HIGH TO A MOSQUITO.** A common hyperbolical expression to denote diminutive stature; as, "I knew him before he was *knee high to a mosquito*."

**KNICKER or NICKER.** (Dutch, *knikker*.) A boy's clay marble; a common term in New York. It is also used in England, being defined by Halliwell: "A little ball of clay or earth baked hard and oiled over, for boys to play at *nickers*."

**KNICKERBOCKER.** A descendant of one of the old Dutch families of New York City.

**KNICK-KNACKERY or NICKNACKERY.** A knick-knack.

There is one branch of trade which has not suffered in common with other things, and that is the sale of costly *knickknackeries*, especially women's superlative gear. — *New York Tribune*.

**KNOB.** In Kentucky, round hills or knolls are called *knobs*. These hills are formed by the weathering of the soft sandstones and shales composing them. The approach to this "*knob formation*" from the rich land is very characteristic, and the sudden change in soil is accompanied by a corresponding change in the inhabitants. The word, however, has extended its meaning, and in Kentucky, as well as other parts of the West, is used simply for hill. In Maryland and Virginia the term *knob* is ap-

plied to the highest peaks of the Blue Ridge, and other irregular mountains.

Approaching Galena, the country becomes still more broken and rocky, until at last a few short hills, here called *knobs*, indicate our approach to Fever River.—*Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 303.

**KNOBBY.** Hilly. The prairie of south-western Missouri is characterized by what are called *knobs* or mounds; they are somewhat variable in size and form, but usually present the appearance of a truncated cone.—*Swallow's Geology of Missouri*, p. 204.

**KNOBITE.** A dweller in the “knob” formation of Kentucky.

**KNOB-LICK.** The base of the “knobs” contains shales, which furnish alum and other salts, forming “licks,” to which wild and domestic animals resort. One of these *knob licks* in Mercer county, Kentucky, is a very remarkable spot, and was in former times a favorite resort of the buffaloes. Many acres are entirely devoid of vegetation, and clay banks in every possible shape occupy the surface.

**KNOCK-DOWN AND DRAG-OUT.** A fight carried to extremities.

There are good, quiet, easy people in the world, who scarcely open their lips or raise their fingers, lest Dogberry So-and-so across the way might take it in high dudgeon, and forthwith demand an explanation or a *knock-down and drag-out*.—*New York Spirit of the Times*, Sept. 30, 1848.

Mike professed to be considerable of a fighter, and, in a regular *knock-down and drag-out* row, was hard to beat.—*Southern Sketches*, p. 30.

**KNOCK-KNEED.** One whose knees are so close that they “interfere” in walking. It is doubtless an English expression, though not in the dictionaries.

Risingh, who succeeded to the command of New Sweden, looms largely in ancient records as a gigantic Swede, who, had he not been *knock-kneed* and splay-footed, might have served for the model of a Samson.—*Knickerbocker, New York*.

**KNOCKED INTO A COCKED HAT.** Knocked out of shape; spoiled; ruined. The allusion or metaphor seems to be that of the hat of some unlucky wight, which, by a violent blow, has been knocked into a sort of flattened, three-cornered shape, resembling an old-fashioned cocked hat.

A tall, slatternly looking woman, wearing a dingy old silk bonnet, which was *knocked into a cocked hat*, appeared yesterday before the Recorder.—*New Orleans Picayune*.

One of the omnibuses here run full tilt against a cart, and *knocked* every thing into a kind of *cocked hat*.—*Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

At a Repeal meeting in New York, Mr. Locke was proceeding to speak of the influence this party would have, when he was interrupted by a gang of rowdies, who, with the design of disturbing the meeting, cried out, “Three cheers for O’Connell—three cheers for Repeal—and three groans for Slavery!” The six cheers for

O'Connell and Repeal were given, but by the time they came to the groans for Slavery, they found themselves all *knocked into a cocked hat*.—*New York Paper*.

Between three and four thousand persons were assembled at the Broadway Tabernacle the other evening to hear a temperance lecture from the talented Mr Gough. There were "long-robed doctors" enough to have constituted a standing army. The Rev. Dr. —, who opened the meeting with prayer, got through in the very short space of three quarters of an hour; but it was full long enough to *knock* the spirit of the meeting *into a "cocked hat"*—*New York Tribune*.

**TO KNOCK ABOUT.** To go or saunter about. An English phrase, though not in the dictionaries.

A long course of solicitation, haunting public offices, and *knocking about* town, had taught him [General Gates], it was said, how to wheedle, and flatter, and accommodate himself to the humors of others.—*Irving, Life of Washington*, Vol. I. p. 423

**TO KNOCK DOWN.** To assign to a bidder at an auction by a blow on the counter; as, "The tall copy of Shakspeare was *knocked down* to Mr. Jones."

**TO KNOCK OFF.** To dock off; deduct. Vulgar.

**TO KNOCK ROUND.** To go about carelessly, to wander or saunter about, i. e. "to knock about."

I'm going to New York and Boston, and all about thar, and spend the summer until pickin' time, *knockin' round* in them big cities, 'mong them people what's so monstrous smart, and religious, and refined, and see if I can't pick up some ideas worth rememberin'.—*Major Jones's Sketches*.

The Indian will lose his hair, if he and his band *knock round* here too often.—*Ruxton, Life in the Far West*.

**KNOW-NOTHINGS.** A new and more proscriptive party of "Native Americans," which originated in the year 1853. The New York Times gives the following account of the origin of the name: "The *Know-Nothing* party, it is pretty generally known, was first formed by a person of some notoriety in New York, who called himself 'Ned Butline.' 'Ned' was once a midshipman in the United States Navy, but left the service and commenced the business of Americanism on a large scale, by founding a secret political order, of so exclusive a character that none were to be admitted as members whose grandfathers were not natives of the country. It is a difficult matter, in a country like the United States, where free inquiry is so common, to keep any thing secret; and Ned instructed his proselytes and acolytes to reply to all questions in respect to the movements of the new party, 'I don't know.' So, they were at first called 'Don't-knows,' and then '*Know-Nothings*,' by outsiders, who knew nothing more of them than that they invariably replied, 'I don't know,' to all questions." The following articles of their "platform" or set of

principles, according to the "American Crusader," one of the leading newspapers of the party, contain the gist of the whole :

1. Repeal of all naturalization laws.
2. None but native Americans for office.
3. A pure American common school system.
4. War to the hilt on Romanism.

These were the principles of the ultra men of the party. In Louisiana and other parts they were disposed to be more liberal towards the Roman Catholics, admitting such as were born in the United States. There was also a difference of opinion regarding slavery, and upon the latter issue the party became divided into North and South Americans. See also *Sam* and *Hindoos*.

**KNOW-NOTHINGISM.** The doctrines of the Know-Nothings.

The Know-Nothings have had their day, and very soon there will be nothing left of them but their name. The earth hath bubbles, and *Know-Nothingism* was one of them. — *New York Times*.

**KONCKS, or CONKS.** Wreckers are so called, familiarly, at Key West; and the place they inhabit is called Koncktown.

**KOOL SLAA.** A contraction for the Dutch *Kool-salade*, i. e. Cabbage salad. Many persons who affect accuracy, but do not know the origin of the term, pronounce the first syllable as if it were the English word *cold*.

**KOOYAH ROOT, or KOOYAHs.** A term applied by the Indians in Oregon to a root used by them in making a bread called *supale*. The plant yielding the root is *Valeriana officinalis* or *V. Edulis*, probably the same as that sometimes written Kous. It is frequently called Tobacco Root. It should be baked in the ground two days, to deprive it of poisonous properties. The bread has an offensive taste to those not familiarized to it.

**KRISS KRINGLE.** (Germ. *Christ Kindlein*.) The infant Christ. The German for child is *kind*, of which the diminutive is *kindlein* or *kindchen*. This, in some parts of Germany and in Pennsylvania, has been formed into *kindel*, and the children are promised gifts at Christmas from "*Christ kindel*." The corruption of this last into *Kriss Kringle*, as a name for the babe of Bethlehem, is neither English nor bad German, but a mere jargon or gibberish of the vilest kind.

## L.

**LABRADOR TEA.** (*Ledum palustre*.) A plant used far in the North-west as a substitute for tea.

**LAFAYETTE FISH.** (*Leiostomus obliquus*.) A delicious sea-fish, which ap-



pears in the summer in great abundance at Cape Island on the Jersey coast, and is hence called the Cape May Goody. The name *Lafayette fish*, by which it is known in New York and its vicinity, was given it on account of its appearance one summer coinciding with the last visit of General Lafayette to America. — *Professor S. F. Baird*.

**LADIES' TRESSES.** (*Neottia tortillis*.) The popular name, in the Southern States, for an herb so called from the spiral arrangement of its flowers, resembling curls.

**LAGER-BEER.** (Germ. *Lager-Bier*, i. e. Stock-beer.) Sometimes contracted into *lager*. A kind of small beer introduced a few years ago into the American cities by the Germans, and now much in vogue among all classes. The following story is told of its origin :

Many years ago a shoemaker, near Bamberg, sent his apprentice to get a bottle of Bamberg beer, which was sold at that place ; but the boy, not knowing this, went to the city itself. On returning, he met an acquaintance of his, who told him that when he would come home, his "boss" would whip him for staying so long. The poor boy, who was frightened at this, thought it better not to go home at all, but took his bottle, buried it under a tree, and ran away. He went among the soldiers, where he distinguished himself, so that, in short, he became an officer. When one day his regiment was quartered in this small town, the officer thought proper to pay a visit to his old boss, but not before he had got the bottle of beer, which he had buried some years before under the tree. When he entered, he said : "Well, Sir, here I bring you your bottle of Bamberg beer that you sent me for." The shoemaker, not knowing what this meant, was told by the officer all about it. The bottle was then opened, and the beer was found to be of superior quality. When this fact was known, some of the brewers built deep vaults, where they put their beer, and called it, after it had lain there some time, *lager*, which means nothing more than lying [not so, it means the beams in the cellar on which the casks are laid]. The officer afterwards married the daughter of the shoemaker, and drank a good deal of *lager beer*, receiving in that occupation the assistance of his father-in-law. — *National Intelligencer*, February 12, 1857.

The Philadelphia Ledger says that there are one hundred thousand barrels, of thirty-two gallons each, of *lager beer*, manufactured in that city in a year. That is a barrel for every male adult in the city. — *Baltimore Sun*, July 12, 1858.

The German drinks his *lager*, and drinks it apparently in indefinite quantities, without any of the usual effects of intoxication. — *New York Express*, June, 1858.

**LAKE LAWYER.** (Genus, *Amia*. Linnæus.) The Western Mud-fish. It is found in Lakes Erie and Ontario, where it is known by the name of Dog-fish. Dr. Kirtland says, it is also called the *lake lawyer*, from its "ferocious looks and voracious habits."

**TO LAM.** (Belg. *lamen*.) To beat soundly ; to drub. Colloquial in some of the Northern States. It is provincial in Yorkshire, England. — *William's Glossary*.

If Millwood were here, dash my wig,  
Quoth he, I would beat her and *lam* her weel. — *Rejected Addresses*.

The gentleman, who fondly imagined himself a bat, stood his ground like a regular built chicken, and "went in" a number of times, but his adversary, a stalwart butcher, was too much used to "*lam*" to be vanquished, and his superior prowess was soon made manifest by the commercial gentleman's face. — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

Cooney would pitch into a private dispute, when he did n't care a durn cent which walloped the other, and *lam* them both. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31

If I had got a hold of him, I'd a *lammed* him worse than the devil beatin' tan bark, I know. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 193.

LAMANTIN. See *Manatee*.

TO LAMBASTE. To beat, thresh, *lam*.

LAMBASTING. A beating.

LAMB-KILL. See *Calf-kill*.

LAMB'S QUARTER. The popular name of an herb (*Oenopodium album*) at the South. — *Williams's Florida*.

LAME DUCK. A stockjobber who has failed, or one unable to meet his engagements.

On the southern corner of the Exchange stand half a score of excited faces. These are the famous Third Board of Brokers — mostly *lame ducks*, who have been disabled for life in their passage through the more secret operations of the regular Board up stairs, and greenhorns who are very anxious to come in and be caught. — *New York in Slits, Wall Street*.

LAMMING. A beating.

LAND OFFICE. An office or place in which the sale and management of the public lands are conducted. — *Worcester*. These offices are all under the control of the *General Land Office* at Washington, which forms one of the bureaus of the Department of the Interior.

LAND SCRIP. A certificate or certificates that the purchase-money for a certain portion of land has been paid to the officer entitled to receive it. See *Land Warrant*.

The surveyors are authorized and directed, upon the application of any holder of *land scrip*, to survey at the expense of the government a sufficient quantity of vacant land to satisfy such legal claims of all holders of *land scrip* sold by this government. — *Laws of Texas*.

LAND WARRANT. An instrument or writing issued by the Secretary of the General Land Office, authorizing a person to locate or take up a tract of new or uncultivated land.

LANE. In the Carolinas, all roads with fences on each side are called *lanes*.

LANYAP. Something over and above. Louisiana.

**LARIAT.** (Span. *Lariata*.) A rope made with thongs of raw hide twisted or braided, and sometimes of sea grass, used for catching and picketing wild horses or cattle. It is also called a *lasso*.

The greatest display of skill and agility of the arrieros consists in their dexterous use of the lazo or *lariat*. — *Gregg's Commerce of the Prairies*.

If the horse manifested the least restiveness, Beattie would worry him with the *lariat* so as almost to throw him on the ground. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

The *lariat* [of the Californian boy] darted from his hand with the force and precision of a rifle ball, and rested on the neck of the fugitive horse — *Emory's New Mexico and California*, p. 97.

We cooked supper, and at dark picketed the animals round the camp, their *lariats*, or skin ropes, being attached to pegs driven in the ground. — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 212.

**LARRUP.** To beat, to flog. — *Forby*.

The man that says the country won't be safe with Old Hickory, who *larruped* the Indians, and whipped the British, is a deceivin', lyin' cuss; and now, boys, all of you, off hats and hurrah for Jackson! — *Hammond, Hills and Lakes*.

The first chance I got I was gwine to *larrup* him like all fury, and as soon as he heard it, began cussin' like all wrath. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

Just come on an' I'll *larrup* you till your mammy won't know you from a pile of sausage meat. — *Southern Fun and Sentiment*, p. 34.

**LASO.** (Span. *lazo*.) A long rope or cord, often made of raw hide, with a noose, for the purpose of catching wild horses or buffaloes on the Western prairies. It is also used by the muleteers for catching their mules. See *Lariat*.

**TO LATHER.** To beat. — *Wilbraham's Glossary*.

**LATHERING.** A beating.

**LATHY.** Thin, slender, like a lath.

**LAVE!** (French, *lève*.) Get up! A term in common use among the hunters and mountaineers of the Western prairies and Rocky Mountains.

"*Lave*, ho! *Lave!* Prairies on fire! Quick — catch up! catch up!" This startling announcement instantly brought every man to his feet. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 34.

**LAW DAY.** The day on which a magistrate holds court at a country tavern. Common in thinly settled districts in the West.

**LAW SAKES.** *Law sakes alive!* i. e. for the Lord's sake! an expression denoting surprise or astonishment.

*Law sakes alive*, man! Make a question between our nation and England about fifty deserters! — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 23.

**LAWING.** Going to law. "I got my debt of him by *lawing*." Western.

**LAWYER.** 1. (*Himantopus nigricollis*.) The black-necked Stilt; a small bird which lives on our shores, known also by the names of Tilt and Longshanks. On the New Jersey coast it is sometimes called *lawyer*, on account of its "long bill."

2. (Genus, *Lota*.) A fish found in the river St. Lawrence. Mr. Hammond, in his "Wild Northern Scenes," thus speaks of it:

There were taken in the net, pickerel, white fish, bass, and pike by the dozen; and, what was a stranger to me, a queer looking specimen of the piscatory tribe, half bull-head and half eel, with a cross of the lizard.

"What on earth is that?" said I to the fisherman.

"That," said he, "is a species of lung; which we call in these parts a *lawyer*."

"A *lawyer*!" said I; "why, pray?"

"I don't know," he replied, "unless it's because he ain't of much use, and the slippiest fish that swims."—p. 45.

**LAY.** 1. Terms or conditions of a bargain; price. Ex. "I bought the articles at a good *lay*;" "He bought his goods on the same *lay* that I did mine." A low word, used in New England.—*Pickering*. Probably a contraction for *outlay*, i. e. expenditure.

2. The word is also used colloquially in New York and New England in relation to labor or contracts performed upon shares; as, when a man ships for a whaling voyage, he agrees for a certain *lay*, i. e. a share of the proceeds of the voyage.

He took in his fish at such a *lay*, that he made a good profit on them — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman*.

**TO LAY, for to lie.** A vulgar error, equally common in England and in the United States. Thus we often hear and also see in print such phrases as, "he *laid* down," for he lay down to sleep; "that bed has been *laid* in," for has been lain in; "the land *lays* well," for lies well; it "*lays* due north," for lies, etc. In the following extract English and German grammar are both set at naught:

Lager beer derives its name from the long time it is allowed to *lay* (*lager*) in vats or casks, in cool cellars, previous to consumption.—*Wells, Principles and Applications of Chemistry*, p. 436.

**LEADER.** A length of finely twisted hair, gut, or grass, for attaching an angler's hook to the line; a bottom. Called also a Snell.

**LEAN-TO.** A pent-house; an addition made to a house behind, or at the end of it, chiefly for domestic offices, of one story or more, lower than the main building, and the roof of it leaning against the wall of the house.—*Forby's Norfolk Glossary*. The word is used in New England, where it is usually pronounced *linter*.—*Pickering*.

Many of the domestic offices of the household were performed upon the stoop or  
*Benches Eastford.*

**LEATHER-WOOD.** (*Dirca palustris*.) A small shrub with flexible branches and a tough, leathery bark, which grows in woods in the Northern States. It is also called Moose Wood; and in New England, Wicopy.

**LECOMPTONITE.** An upholder of the pro-slavery constitution for Kansas promulgated at the city of Lecompton.

**LEGGINGS.** (Commonly written and pronounced *leggings*.) Indian wrappers for the legs; also worn by the white hunters and trappers of the West, both on account of the mud and to save the pantaloons from the sweat of the horse. The Indians of New Mexico and Texas wear leggings when they are entirely destitute of other garments. They are necessary there to protect the legs when riding through the chapporal. By some they are called Wrappers.

How piquantly do these trim and beaded *leggings* peep from under that simple dress of black, as its tall nut-brown wearer moves through the graceful mazes of the dance! — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 239.

The wolf springs with fearful growl towards Stemaw, who slightly wounds him with his axe, as he jumps backwards just in time to save himself from the infuriated animal, which catches in its fangs the flap of his *leggin*. — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

**LEGISLATIVE.** The Legislaturc. This, like the term “executive,” is used in America as a noun; but it is by no means so common as that word. — *Pickering*.

**LEG-STRETCHER.** It is said that drams are now called “*leg-stretchers*” in Vermont. It is an every-day occurrence there for passengers in the stage-coaches, while the latter are waiting for the mails, to say, “I guess I’ll get out and stretch my legs,” which always ends in their having a drink somewhere in the hotel.

**LENGTHY.** Having length, long, not brief; tiresomely long. Applied often to dissertations or discourses; as, “a *lengthy* oration,” “a *lengthy* speech.” — *Worcester*.

This word was once very common among us, both in writing and in the language of conversation; but it has been so much ridiculed by Americans as well as Englishmen, that in writing it is now generally avoided. Mr. Webster has admitted it into his Dictionary; but (as need hardly be remarked) it is not in any of the English ones. It is applied by us, as Mr. Webster justly observes, chiefly to writings or discourses. Thus we say, a *lengthy* pamphlet, a *lengthy* sermon, etc. The English would say, a *long*, or (in the more familiar style) a *longish* sermon. It may be here remarked, by the way, that they make much more use of the termination *ish* than we do; but this is only in the language of conversation. — *Pickering*.

Mr. Pickering has many other interesting remarks on this word, for which I refer the reader to his work. The word has been gradually forcing its way into general use since the time in which he wrote; and that, too, in England as well as in America. Thus Mr. Rush, in relating a conversation which he had in London, observes: "Lord Harrowby spoke of words that had obtained a sanction in the United States, in the condemnation of which he could not join; as, for example, *lengthy*, which imported, he said, what was tedious as well as long — an idea that no other English word seemed to convey as well." — *Residence in London*, p. 294. The Penny Cyclopædia remarks on it to the same effect, and even disputes its American origin.

A writer in the Boston Daily Advertiser, under the signature of "W. X.," says, that he has met with the word *lengthy* in the London Times, the Liverpool Chronicle, Blackwood's Magazine, the Saturday Magazine, the British Critic, Quarterly Review, Monthly Review, Eclectic Review, Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Reviews, in the writings of Dr. Dibdin, Bishop Jebb, Lord Byron, Coleridge, etc. etc. Granby, an English author, uses the word *lengthiness*, which is a regularly formed noun from *lengthy*. Campbell uses the adverb *lengthily*. In his "Letters from the South," he says:

I could discourse *lengthily* on the names of Jugurtha, Juba, Syphax, etc. and again:

The hair of the head is bound *lengthily* behind.

Here follow a few examples from English and American writers, out of the many that present themselves:

Murray has sent, or will send, a double copy of the *Bride and Giaour*; in the last one some *lengthy* additions; pray accept them according to the old custom. — *Lord Byron's Letter to Dr. Clarke*, Dec. 13, 1813.

All this excitement was created by two *lengthy* paragraphs in the Times. — *London Athenæum*, July 12, 1844, p. 697.

This man had timely warning from his God  
To build a spacious ark of Gopher-wood;  
He, moved through fear and faith, the structure rears,  
Which cost the arduous task of six score years.  
While Noah thus employed this *lengthy* space, etc.

*Noah's Flood: a Poem by Jos. Vail, New London, 1796.*

Chalmers's Political Annals, in treating of South Carolina, is by no means as *lengthy* as Mr. Hewitt's History. — *Drayton's South Carolina*.

I did not mean to have been so *lengthy* when I began. — *Jefferson's Writings*.

I forget whether Mr. Sibthorpe has mentioned, in any of his numerous and *lengthy* epistles, this circumstance. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

**LENGTHILY.** In a *lengthy* manner. Webster credits this word to Jefferson.

In the report of a convention of "Spiritualists" at Farmington, Michigan, it is said, that,

Mr. Summons followed, addressing the convention quite *lengthily* — *Spiritual Telegraph*.

TO LET BE. To refrain from annoying, to let alone. An expression often used by children; as, "*Let me be*; I don't trouble you."

TO LET ON. To mention; to disclose; to betray a knowledge or consciousness of any thing. "He never *let on*," i. e. he never told me. This expression is often heard among the illiterate, and is not confined to any particular section of the United States. It is also used in the North of England and in Scotland.

'T is like I may, — but *let na on* what's past

'Tween you and me, else fear a kittle cast.

*Ramsay, The Gentle Shepherd.*

The tears were runnin' out of my eyes; but I did n't want to *let on*, for fear it would make her feel bad. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 84.

TO LET OUT. To begin a story or narrative. A Western expression.

Tom squared himself for a yarn, wet his lips with a little corn juice, took a small strip of Missouri weed, and *let out*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

TO LET SLIDE. To let go; as, "That fish you have hooked is not fit to eat; *let him slide*."

In bad places you may fasten a rope to the axle of the wagon, and, passing the end round a tree, you may *let her slide*. — *F. Marryatt, California*.

In a debate in Congress on a bill providing for the establishment of an overland mail to California, the annual cost of which was estimated at half a million of dollars, Mr. Iverson said:

If California was going to cost the Union so much, it would be better to *let California slide*.

Sal Stebbins married a feller blind in one eye and deaf in one ear; so I thought if she was a mind to take such a chap, I'd better *let her slide*. — *Traits of American Humor*.

"Come, Sol, let's have a game of poker."

"Oh, *let the poker slide*, Judge," replied Sol; "some other time when I want a stake, I'll make a call." — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 221.

LET UP. A *let up* is a release; a relief. An expression borrowed from pugilists.

There was no *let up* in the stock market to day, and the differences paid on the maturing contracts were very large. — *New York Tribune*.

LEEVE. 1. (Fr. *levée*). An embankment on the side of a river, to confine it within its natural channel. The lower part of Louisiana, which has been formed by encroachments upon the sea, is subject to be inundated

by the Mississippi and its various branches for a distance of more than three hundred miles. In order to protect the rich lands on these rivers, mounds are thrown up, of clay, cypress logs, and green turf, sometimes to the height of fifteen feet, with a breadth of thirty feet at the base. These, in the language of that part of the country, are called *levees*. They extend for hundreds of miles; and when the rivers are full, cultivated fields, covered with rich crops and studded with villages, are seen lying far below the river courses. — *Encyclopædia Americana*.

The great feature of New Orleans is the *Levee*. Extending for about five miles in length, and an average of two hundred feet in width, on the west bank of this river, which here runs to the north-east, it is made the great depôt, not only for the products of the vast country bordering on the Mississippi and its navigable tributaries, but also of every foreign port, by means of about five hundred steamboats on the one hand, and every variety of sea-craft on the other, which are at all times to be seen in great numbers along the entire length, discharging and receiving their cargoes — *Cor. of New York Tribune*.

2. (Fr. *lever*.) The time of rising; the concourse of persons who visit a prince or great personage in the morning. — *Johnson*.

Such as are troubled with the disease of *levee-hunting*, and are forced to seek their bread every morning at the chamber doors of great men. — *Addison, Spectator*, No. 547.

This word has been curiously perverted by us from its original signification, so as to mean an *evening* (!) party or assembly at the house of a great or wealthy person; as, "the President's *levee*."

**LEVEERING.** Constructing levees on a river's bank.

If we cannot protect ourselves from overflow, these lands will be almost worthless, and the slaves on them must find a tillable soil in the West, our hill lands being now fully occupied. How are we to be protected? By *leveeing*. — *De Bow's Review*, Oct. 1858.

**LEVY.** Elevenpence. In the State of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, the Spanish real, or eighth part of a dollar, or twelve and a half cents. Sometimes called an *elevenpenny bit*. See *Federal Currency*, and *Bit*.

**LIBERTY CAP.** A peaked cap placed on the head of the goddess of Liberty or on liberty poles. See *Liberty Pole*.

**LIBERTY POLE.** A tall pole, sometimes constructed of several pieces of timber like a ship's mast, and surmounted by a "liberty cap," the whole in allusion to Gessler's cap which Tell refused to do homage to, thus leading to the freedom of Switzerland. Many of these poles are erected in different parts of American cities.

**LICK or SALT LICK.** A salt spring is called a *lick*, from the earth about it being furrowed out in a most curious manner, by the buffalo and



deer, which *lick* the earth on account of the saline particles with which it is impregnated. — *Imlay's Topogr. Description of the Western Territory.*

A *lick* does not necessarily imply the presence of a spring; the decomposition of sulphurets by atmospheric agency often makes a "*lick*" on the face of a rocky cliff.

**LICKS.** Strokes; and hence efforts, exertions. "To put in big *licks*" is to make great exertions, to work hard.

Molly war the most enticin', gizzard-tickin', heart-distressin' felme creatur that ever made a fellar get owdacious; and I seed Tom Seller cavertin' round her, and puttin' in the *biggest kind a licks* in the way of courtin'. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 276.

**LICKETY SPLIT.** Very fast, headlong; synonymous with the equally elegant phrase "full chisel." "He went *lickety split* down hill." *Lickety cut* and *lickety liner* are also used.

**LIE.** *A lie out of whole cloth* is an utter falsehood.

In the second place, we are authorized by these gentlemen to say that the statement is in itself utterly false — "*a lie*," as one of the commissioners wished us to say, "*out of whole cloth*." — *New York Commercial Advertiser.*

**TO LIE DOWN.** To go to bed. In Tennessee, when a stranger is asked if he will retire for the night, the question is, "Will you *lie down*?"

**LIEFER or LIEVER.** More willingly, rather. A colloquialism also used in England.

"I will," I replied, "and I had *liefer* read it now than before the beautiful music." — *Putnam's Monthly*, March, 1855.

**LIEFS or LIEVES.** A corruption of lief or lieve; as, "I'd as *lieves* be seen as not."

**LIFE EVERLASTING.** See "Everlasting."

**LIFT.** Used by the farmers in some parts of New England to signify a sort of gate without hinges. — *Pickering's Vocabulary.* This word is also used in some parts of England. Mr. Forby calls it "a sort of coarse, rough gate of sawn wood, not hung, but driven into the ground by pointed stakes, like a hurdle, used for the same purposes of subdividing lands, stopping gaps in fences, etc. and deriving its name from the necessity of lifting it up for the purpose of passing through. In Suffolk, a *lift* differs from a gate, in having the projecting ends of the back and lower bar let into mortice holes in the posts, into and out of which it must be *lifted*." — *Norfolk Glossary.*

**TO LIFT ONE'S HAIR,** in the figurative language of the Western hunters, is to scalp him.

**LIG.** A fish-hook with lead cast round its upper part, in order to sink it. Maine.

**LIGHT BREAD.** Fermented bread of wheat flour ; so called to distinguish it from corn bread. South and West.

**LIGHT WOOD.** Pine wood as opposed to slower burning wood, not on account of the lightness of the wood, but of the light afforded by it in burning, a matter of some importance where candles are not to be had.

Stranger, it's quite a long history, and I'll put on a fresh handful of *light wood* before I begin. — *Simms, The Wigwam and Cabin.*

The inhabitants pick up knots of *light wood*, which they burn into tar, and then carry it to Norfolk to a market. — *Westover Papers*, p. 27.

"Cæsar, fly round and get a fire."

"Massa! de *light wood* am done gone, 'sah."

"Gone too, then, is all chance for fire or food. For who ever heard of a nigger that could build a fire without *light wood*?" — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

**LIKE.** 1. For *as*. As in the phrase, "*like* I do" for as I do. Not peculiar to America.

Each Indian carried a great square piece of whale's blubber, with a hole in the middle, through which they put their heads, *like* the Guachos do through their cloaks. — *Darwin's Journal of a Naturalist*, ch. 10.

As soon as the post-office was open, I looked over the miscellany *like* I always do, afore I let anybody take it. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

2. For *as if*, or, *as though*. A vulgarism common at the West.

The fever nager got fastened to me, and stuck just *like* a Comanche on a mustang : the worse it jumps the tighter he sticks, as if he was glued to the saddle, or *like* he was one of them rale half horse and half alligator fellows. — *New York Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

The old fellow drank of the brandy *like* he was used to it. — *Southern Sketches*.

**LIKE A BOOK.** To know a person or thing *like a book*, means to have studied him or it, to know him or it thoroughly.

He knew the woods *like a book*, and had got a pretty cute notion whar Bill Stone would bring up. — *New York Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

**LIKELY.** That may be liked ; that may please ; handsome. In the United States, as a colloquial term, respectable ; worthy of esteem ; sensible. — *Worcester*.

Mr. Webster has the following remarks on this word : "This use of *likely* [i. e. in the sense of, such as may be liked, pleasing] is not obsolete, nor is it vulgar. But the English and their descendants differ in the application. The English apply the word to external appearance, and with them *likely* is equivalent to *handsome, well-formed* ; as, a *likely* man, a *likely* horse. In America, the word is usually applied to the endowments of the mind, or to pleasing accomplishments. With us, a *likely*

man is a man of good character and talents, or of good disposition or accomplishments, that render him pleasing or respectable."

That the word, however, is also used here in its English sense, is evident from the following quotation:

A gang of seventeen *likely* negro men, owned in the vicinity of Northampton, Virginia, made an attempt on Monday last to escape to New York. — *Norfolk (Va.) Herald*, Oct. 1, 1849.

LILY-PADS. Leaves of the water-lily.

LIMB. Leg. This is one of the mock-modest expressions of which our people are overfond.

If we know any thing of English conversation or letters, we speedily find out, even if stone blind, that British men and women have both arms and legs. But in Canada a stranger who could not see would find it difficult to discover much about our conformation. He would learn that both sexes had *limbs* of some sort; but from any information which our language would give he could not tell whether their *limbs* were used to stand on or hold by — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

This will do for a provincial place like Canada; but the universal Yankee nation does not restrict its application of the word to "humans," as appears from the following:

Our exchanges bring us the intelligence of the death of Dan Rice's well-known horse "Excelsior." The poor brute, it would appear, fell from the stairs which he used to ascend in the ring, and, fracturing his *limb*, his death was rendered necessary. — *Pittsburg Chronicle*, June, 1858.

LIMITS. The extent of the liberties of a prison. — *Webster*. Called also *jail liberties*.

LIMSY. Weak; flexible. New England. — *Webster*.

LINE. The route of a stage-coach, railroad, packet, or steamer.

TO LINE. To fish with a line. So, *to seine*, i. e. to fish with a seine. I have never seen these words used except by Dr. J. V. C. Smith, in his *History of the Fishes of Massachusetts*; and for so interesting a book the Doctor is well entitled to the privilege of coining a phrase or two.

The squeteague is taken both by *lining* and *seining*, and because it makes such feeble exertion and resistance, in being drawn in by a hook, it has received the appellation of *weak fish*. — *Fishes of Massachusetts*.

TO LINE BEES is to track wild bees to their homes in the woods. One who follows this occupation is called a *bee hunter*.

At killing every wild animal of the woods or prairies, at fishing, or at *lining bees*, the best hunters acknowledged his supremacy. — *Kendall*.

I've hear'n tell of such doin's, but never see'd a *bee lined* in all my life, and have a desp'rate fancy for larnin' of all sorts, from 'rithmetic to preachin.' — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

**LINER.** The ships belonging to the regular lines of London, Liverpool, or Havre packets are called *liners*, to distinguish them from transient ships sailing to the same ports.

**LINES.** The reins, or that part of the bridle which extends from the horse's head to the hands of the driver or coachman.

**LINGUISTER.** (Pron. *linkister*.) A seaman's term for an interpreter; a linguist. Also, in New England, applied to a talkative person.

It is a damnable thing for a youngster, up here, to talk French. If it were on the Atlantic now, where a seafaring man has occasion sometimes to converse with a pilot or a *linguister* in that language, I should not think so much of it. — *Cooper, The Pathfinder*, p. 219.

**LIQUOR.** Many and very singular names have been given to the various compounds or mixtures of spirituous liquors and wines served up in fashionable bar-rooms in the United States. The following list is taken from one advertisement:

|                   |                   |                  |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Plain mint julep. | I. O. U.          | Milk punch.      |
| Fancy do.         | Tippe na Pecco.   | Cherry do.       |
| Mixed do.         | Moral suasion.    | Peach do.        |
| Peach do.         | Vox populi.       | Jewett's fancy.  |
| Pineapple do.     | No plus ultra.    | Deacon.          |
| Claret do.        | Shambro.          | Exchange.        |
| Capped do.        | Virginia fancy.   | Stone wall.      |
| Strawberry do.    | Knuckerbocker.    | Sifter.          |
| Arrack do.        | Smasher.          | Soda punch.      |
| Racchorse do.     | Floater           | Slingflip.       |
| Sherry cobbler.   | Pig and whistle.  | Cocktail.        |
| Rochelle do.      | Citronella Jam.   | Apple-jack.      |
| Arrack do.        | Egg nog.          | Chain-lightning. |
| Peach do.         | Sargent.          | Phlegm-cutter.   |
| Claret do.        | Silver top.       | Switchel-flip.   |
| Tip and Ty.       | Poor man's punch. | Ching-ching.     |
| Fiscal agent.     | Arrack do.        | Tog.             |
| Veto.             | Iced do.          | Ropee.           |
| Slip ticket.      | Spiced do.        | Porteree.        |
| Folk and Dallas.  | Epicure's do.     | etc. etc.        |

**IN LIQUOR.** Intoxicated, drunk.

**TO LIQUOR, or TO LIQUOR UP.** To take a dram; or, as we more frequently say, to take a drink.

He was the first to break silence, and, jumping up, asked all to *liquor* before going to bed. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 31.

"The child must be named Margaret." "No! Mary," replied the father, "in honor of my esteemed wife. Besides, that's a Bible name, and we can't *liquor up* on Margaret." — *Margaret*, p. 89.

"I'll drink with you, and you drink with me; an' then we'll call it square."

"Agreed!" says I, "an' we *lucked* round twiste; an' Jo and I shook hands, an' squared off all old accounts." — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II. p. 75.

"*Liquor up*, gentlemen." We bowed. "Let me introduce you to some of the most highly esteemed of our citizens." We bowed again. "Now then, Mister," turning to the man at the bar, "dinks round and cobbles at that." — *Notes on Canada and the North-western States*, *Blackwood's Mag.* Sept. 1855.

**LISTER.** One who makes a list or roll. — *Webster*. This word is used in Connecticut, and is applied to those who make out lists or returns of cattle or other property. I have never heard the word used elsewhere.

**LITTLE END OF THE HORN.** "To come out at the *little end of the horn*," is said when a ridiculously small effect has been produced after great effort and much boasting.

**LIVE FOREVER.** The name of a fanatical sect in Kentucky whose principal article of faith was that those who had "faith" would never die. Whenever a member died, the answer to this very striking *argumentum ad hominem* was, that he had not the "faith." The number, never very large, was reduced in 1850 to two, and one of these had left the sect, leaving but one "*live forever*."

**LIVE HORSE.** In printers' parlance, work done over and above that included in the week's bill. See *Dead Horse*.

**LLANO.** (Spanish.) The plains or prairies of Texas, New Mexico, and other States and Territories bordering on Mexico, are so called by the people residing there.

**LOAFER.** A vagabond; an idle loungeur. This peculiarly American word has been gradually growing into extensive use during the last thirty years. It was applied in the first place to the vagrants of our large towns, in which sense it is equivalent to the *lazzarone* of Naples or the *lepero* of Mexico. It is now, however, frequently applied in conversation and in the newspapers to idlers in general, and seems to have lost somewhat of its original vulgarity. The Philadelphia Vade Mecum has the following remarks upon it:

"This is a new word, and, as yet, being but a colt, or a chrysalis, is regarded as a slang epithet. It is, however, a good word, one much needed in the language, and will, in time, establish itself in the most refined dictionaries. It will mount into good society, and be uttered by aristocratic lips; for it is the only word designating the most important species of the genus idler — the most important, because the most annoying branch of that family.

"The *loafer* is not exclusively, as some suppose him, a ragged step-and-corner loungeur, who sleeps in the sun, and 'hooks' sugar on the

wharf. On the contrary, the propensity to loaf is confined to no rank in life; all conditions are, more or less, troubled with it. Like squinting, the king and the beggar may be equally afflicted with the imperfection. There be your well-dressed moneyed *loafer*, as well as your *loafer* who is nightly taken by the watch.

"He is that kind of a man, who, having nothing to do, or being unwilling to do any thing, cannot keep his tediousness to himself, and therefore bestows it all upon others, not when they are at leisure for conversational recreation, but when business presses, and they would look black upon the intrusion of a sweetheart or a three-day wife. He is the drag-chain upon industry, and yet so far different from the drag-chain, that he hitches to the wheel when the pull is up hill. Loving the excitement of busy scenes, yet too lazy to be an actor in them, where men are busiest, there too is to be found the pure, unadulterated *loafer*, sprawling about as the hound sprawls before the fire in everybody's way, and tripping up everybody's heels. In the store, he sits upon the counter, swinging his useless legs, and gaping vacantly at the movements around him. In the office, he effectually checks necessary conversation among those who do not wish their business bruited to the world, turns over papers which he has no right to touch, and squints at contents which he has no right to know. In the counting-house, he perches on a stool, interrupts difficult calculations with chat as idle as himself, follows the bustling clerk to the storehouse, pouches the genuine Havana, quaffs nectar from proof-glasses, and makes himself free of the good things which belong to others."

The origin of this word is altogether uncertain. Two etymologies have been suggested for it, namely, the German *laufer*, a runner (comp. the Dutch *leeglooper* and *landlooper*, a vagrant); and the Spanish *gallofo* (whence the Italian *gagloffo*), a wandering mendicant, a vagabond. A writer in Notes and Queries tells the following story of its origin, which certainly *si non è vero, è ben trovato*.

An old Dutchman settled at New York, and acquired a considerable fortune. He had an only daughter, and a young American fell in love with her or her dollars, or both. The old father forbade him his house, but the daughter encouraged him. Whenever the old merchant saw the lover about the premises, he used to exclaim to his daughter, "There is that 'lofer' [lover] of yours, the idle good-for-nothing," etc.; and so an idle man, hanging about, came to be called a "*loafer*."

The following illustration of the use of the word is now "going the rounds" of the newspapers:

"You're a *loafer* — a man without a calling," said a judge to a person arrested as a vagrant. "I beg your pardon, your honor, I have a vocation." "What is it?" "I smoke glass for eclipses; but just now it is our dull season."

**TO LOAFER OR LOAF.** To lounge; to idle away one's time. The verb is of more recent origin than the noun.

We arrived at the town of Tincenn, the sun being exceedingly hot, we waited till evening. The Casa Real in this as in other towns of the province was the *loafing* place of the Indians. — *Norman's Yucatan*, p. 88.

The Senate has *loafed* away the week in very gentlemanly style. — *New York Commercial Advertiser*, Dec. 1845.

The street [in Hiantown, California,] was crowded all day with miners *loafing* about from store to store, making their purchases and asking each other to drink. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 118.

**TO LOAN.** To lend. This verb is inserted by Todd on the authority of Huloet (1552) and Langley (1664), and noted "not now in use." It is, however, much used in this country, though rarely in England. — *Worcester*.

The Westminster Review, speaking of the "Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost and other Papers," lately published by Washington Irving, says :

"He has the finish of our best English critics ; he has the equability and gentle humor of Addison and Goldsmith. It is very rarely that we come upon an Americanism ; he is not, however, wholly guiltless ; he makes use of the expression to "*loan* a few pounds."

In England, when one man accommodates another with the use of money for a time, he lends it. The sum is called a *loan* ; but he who provides it is said to *lend* or to have *lent*. Here, however, it is becoming usual to speak of having *loaned* to another. Webster says that to *loan* is rarely used in England, and I may say that I never heard it there. What advantage then does it possess over the more familiar form of the verb that it should supersede it here ? Surely the phrase, "money to lend," is sufficiently intelligible. To talk of *loaning* money would suggest to an unsophisticated Englishman the idea of some unknown process at the mint. — *Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

**LOAN-OFFICE.** A public office in which loans of money are negotiated for the public, or in which the accounts of loans are kept and the interest paid to the lenders. — *Webster*.

**LOAN-OFFICER.** A public officer empowered to superintend and transact the business of a loan office. — *Webster*.

**LOBBY.** The persons who frequent the lobby of a house of legislature.

The special correspondent of the London Times in writing from Washington, thus speaks of the Congressional "*Lobby*" and its influence :

The *Lobby* of Washington has of late years grown to be an appreciable influence, and much indignation is expressed by political purists at its existence. But probably there never was a legislative body in the world without something of the kind. In the old Parliament of Ireland there were regular "undertakers of the king's business," who did not necessarily have seats among the men they influenced ; and the House of Commons has recognised parliamentary agents. The business of the American *Lobby* is something of the same kind, but it has not yet obtained a formal organization. It is at present an outside pressure exercised by a miscellaneous crowd of persons, whose influence may be social, or political, or local, or a combination of any of those elements ; they are often agents of other parties, simply remu-

nerated for their exertions, or they are both agents or principals, having themselves a large joint share in the undertaking at issue. Many are ex-members of Congress, who have the privilege of admission to the lobby.

**TO LOBBY.** To attempt to exert an influence on the members of a legislative body, by besieging them in the lobbies of the house where they meet. So necessary has this business of *lobbying* now become, that, when a petition is sent to a legislature, particularly for an act of incorporation, it is very common for one or more individuals to take it in charge for the purpose of "*lobbying* it through."

There is a quarrel in Philadelphia about Mr. W——'s appointments. Some of the Loco-focos have come out to *lobby* against him. — *New York Tribune*.

A committee has gone to Albany to *lobby* for a new bank charter — *New York Courier and Enquirer*.

**LOBBY-MEMBER.** A person who frequents the lobby of a house of legislation. — *Worcester*.

**LOBLOLLY BAY.** (*Gordonia lasyanthus*.) An elegant ornamental tree of the maritime parts of the Southern States, called also Holly Bay. Its bark is useful for tanning, but its wood of but little value.

**TO LOCATE.** 1. To place; to set in a particular spot or position. — *Pickering. Webster*. This word is comparatively modern in England, and is not found in any of the dictionaries previous to Todd's. It is used among us much more frequently and in a greater variety of senses than in England.

Under this roof the biographer of Johnson passed many jovial, joyous hours; here he has *located* some of the liveliest scenes, and most brilliant passages, in his entertaining anecdotes of his friend Samuel Johnson. — *Cumberland, Memoirs of Himself*.

The Asega-bôk, the book of the judge, contains the laws of the Rustringian Frisians *located* around the gulf of the Jade. — *Bosworth, Preface to Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, p. 61.

The archbishops and bishops of England can neither *locate* and limit dioceses in America, nor ordain bishops in any part of the dominions of Great Britain, out of the realm, by any law of the kingdom, or any law of the colonies, or by any canon law acknowledged by either. — *John Adams, Letter to Dr. Morse*.

A number of courts properly *located* will keep the business of any country in such condition as but few suits will be instituted. — *Debates on the Judiciary*, p. 51.

As we don't know exactly where our own souls reside, what harm is there to pursue such an investigation as to our black brethren? My private opinion is, if a nigger has one, it is *located* in his head. — *Sam. Shuck, Human Nature*, p. 172.

So too a town, a village, and even a piece of ground, is said to be *located*, i. e. placed, situated, in a particular position.

Baber refers to villages formerly *located*, as at the present day, on the plains, etc. — *Masson's Travels in Afghanistan*, Vol. III. p. 193.



When Port Essington was *located*, all these difficulties had to be suffered over again. — *Stokes's Australia*, Vol. I. p. 401.

A lot of earth so singularly *located*, as marks it out by Providence to be the emporium of plenty and the asylum of peace. — [*London*] *Observer*.

And hence arise the following American uses of the word :

2. To select, survey, and settle the bounds of a particular tract of land, or to designate a portion of land by limits ; as, to *locate* a tract of a hundred acres in a particular township. — *Webster*.

In December, 1768, Arthur Lee presented a petition to the king in council, praying :

That your Majesty would grant to his petitioners, to be fifty in number, by the name of the Mississippi Company, 2,500,000 acres of land, in one or more surveys, to be *located* between the thirty-eighth and forty-second degree of north latitude, etc. etc. — *Plain Facts*. Phil. 1781, p. 68.

Mistakes in *locating* land were often very serious — the purchaser finding only swamp or gravel, when he had purchased fine farming land. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

This is also coming into use in the old country, as will be seen by the following example :

The banks of these rivers [the Macquarrie, etc. in New South Wales] are fast filling with settlements ; those of the hunter, the nearest to the seat of government, being, we understand, entirely *located*. — *Edinburgh Review*.

3. Applied to persons, it means :

a. To place in a permanent residence, to settle.

A lady from Maine, who has been *located* on the hill west of us for a week or two, calls to say she has concluded to leave Kansas. — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 50.

b. To place in a particular position.

The mate, having *located* himself opposite to me [at the table], began to expostulate upon the mode of sea travelling. — *Gilliam, Travels in Mexico*.

c. As a technical term used by the Methodists, to settle permanently as a preacher. The word is needed by them, because they have many itinerant preachers, who are not *located*.

Mr Parsons, like most *located* and permanent pastors of a wooden country, received almost nothing for his services. — *Carlton, New Purchase*.

d. To take up one's residence in a place, to settle.

The most unhealthy points are in the vicinity of mill-dams, and of marshes, near both of which the settlers take particular pains to *locate*. — *Hoffman's Winter in the West*, Vol. I.

From the following extract it appears that the word is used with the same latitude of signification in Canada :

A man in Britain buys a house or farm, and it is said to be *in*, or more precisely *situated*, in such a street, or district, or county. Here nobody or thing is situated anywhere, all are *located*. Our farms, our houses, our congregations, our constitu-

encies, all are *located*. We admire a mansion occupying a healthy or commanding site, and we are told that "the *location* is good;" a clergyman is congratulated on his incumbency, which is styled a comfortable *location*; and so on *ad infinitum*. To *locate* is a purely technical term, belonging to land surveyors and their profession; and it is difficult to perceive any gain to the language by its application being extended beyond its original technical significance — *Rev. A. C. Genkie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept. 1857.

**LOCATION, n.** That which is located; a tract of land designated in place. — *Webster*. This application of the word is peculiar to the United States. In civil engineering it is applied to railroads.

**LOCATIVE CALLS.** Calls for the purpose of location. Those calls are in entries of lands, the object of which is to ascertain and identify the land for the purpose of location. References in entries and grants of land to certain particular physical objects (as trees, streams, etc.) which exactly describe the land to be located. — *Chief Justice Marshall, Wheaton's Reports*, Vol. II. p. 206, 211.

**LOCATOR.** In American land law; one who locates land, or intends or is entitled to locate. — *Burrill's Law Dictionary*.

**LOCK, STOCK, AND BARREL.** The whole. A figurative expression borrowed from sportmen, and having reference to a gun.

Look at [this carriage] all through the piece; take it by and large, *lock, stock, and barrel*; and it's the dandy. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch 19

**Loco-Foco.** 1. A self-igniting cigar or match. It is remarkable that the origin of this word has never been given.

In 1834, John Marck opened a store in Park Row, New York, and drew public attention to two novelties. One was champagne wine drawn like soda water from a "fountain;" the other was a self-lighting cigar, with a match composition on the end. These he called "*Loco-foco*" cigars. The mode of getting at the name is obvious. The word "*locomotive*" was then rather new as applied to an engine on a railroad, and the common notion was, that it meant *self-moving*; hence as these cigars were self-firing, this queer name was coined. So Mr. John Marck has the honor of inventing the name. His patent for "self-igniting cigars" bears date April 16, 1834. This term does not occur in the notice of his patent in the *Journal of the Franklin Institute*, but was used in his advertisements, and can probably be found in the newspapers of that day.

The term as applied to a match is therefore an Americanism; but as no other kind of match is now known, as a distinct appellation, it is going out of use. The very use of these matches is of American origin, and at an early date the manufacture reached to an extent almost incredible.

Not long after the date of the naming of the party, one manufacturer alone had invested \$100,000 in making these matches and boxes.

2. The name by which the Democratic party is extensively distinguished throughout the United States. This name originated in the year 1835, when a division arose in the party, in consequence of the nomination of Gideon Lee as the Democratic candidate for Congress, by the committee chosen for that purpose. This nomination, as was customary, had to be confirmed at a general meeting of Democrats held at Tammany Hall. His friends anticipated opposition, and assembled in large numbers to support him. "The first question which arose," says Mr. Hammond, "and which would test the strength of the parties, was the selection of chairman. The friends of Mr. Lee, whom we will call Tammany men, supported Mr. Varian; and the anti-monopolists, Mr. Curtis. The Tammanies entered the hall as soon as the doors were opened, by means of back stairs; while at the same time the Equal Rights party rushed into the long room up the front stairs. Both parties were loud and boisterous; the one declaring that Mr. Varian was chosen chairman, and the other that Mr. Curtis was duly elected the presiding officer. A very tumultuous and confused scene ensued, during which the gas-lights, with which the hall was illuminated, were extinguished. The Equal Rights party, either having witnessed similar occurrences, or having received some intimations that such would be the course of their opponents, had provided themselves with *loco-foco* matches and candles, and the room was re-lighted in a moment. The 'Courier and Enquirer' newspaper dubbed the anti-monopolists, who used the matches, with the name of *Loco-foco*; which was soon after given to the Democratic party, and which they have since retained." — *Hammond's Political History of New York*, Vol. II. p. 491.

LOCUST. A name given in America to several species of *Cicada*.

LOCUST-TREE. (*Robinia pseudacacia*.) A tree much cultivated both for ornament and for its exceedingly durable timber.

LOG CABIN. A house such as is constructed by the early settlers with unhewn logs, roughly notched together at the corners, and the interstices filled with clay. Also called Log Hut and Log House.

LOG CANOE. See *Dug-out*.

LOGGING. The business of felling trees and preparing timber for transportation.

Once more at work, he employed his leisure time in the heavy and dangerous business of logging. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

LOGGING SWAMP. In Maine, the place where pine timber is cut.

# TO LOGICIZE. To reason.

And I give the preliminary view of the reason; because, since this is the faculty which reasons or *logicizes*, etc. — *Tappan's Elements of Logic, Preface*, p. 5.

**LOG-ROLLING.** 1. In the lumber regions of Maine it is customary for men of different logging camps to appoint days for helping each other in rolling the logs to the river, after they are felled and trimmed — this rolling being about the hardest work incident to the business. Thus the men of three or four camps will unite, say on Monday, to roll for camp No. 1, — on Tuesday for camp No. 2, — on Wednesday for camp No. 3, — and so on, through the whole number of camps within convenient distance of each other.

I know how to hate an Indian or love a gal as well as any one. I fell in love with three gals at once at a *log-rolling*; and as for tea-squalls, my heart never shut pan a minute at a time. — *Crockett's Adventures*.

We were compelled, for electioneering objects, to attend this summer several *log-rollings*. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 237.

2. The term has been adopted in legislation to signify a like system of mutual coöperation. For instance, a member from St. Lawrence has a pet bill for a plank road which he wants pushed through; he accordingly makes a bargain with a member from Onondaga who is coaxing along a charter for a bank, by which St. Lawrence agrees to vote for Onondaga's bank, provided Onondaga will vote in turn for St. Lawrence's plank road.

This is legislative *log-rolling*; and there is abundance of it carried on at Albany every winter.

Generally speaking, the subject of the *log-rolling* is some merely local project, interesting only to the people of a certain district; but sometimes there is party *log-rolling*, where the Whigs, for instance, will come to an understanding with the Democrats, that the former shall not oppose a certain Democratic measure merely on party grounds, provided the Democrats will be equally tender to some Whig measure in return. — *J. Inman*.

Another evil of our banking system arises from the very foolish rule, that a single director may reject any paper offered for discount, instead of making the fate of every application depend upon the decision of a majority of the board. This gives a power to individuals at variance with the interests of the community. It produces what is termed *log-rolling* in legislation, and makes good and liberal-minded men responsible for the conduct of individuals who look solely to self. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

Mr. Davis has the best prospect for speaker, without the fetters of a caucus. But with such a system of *log-rolling*, the one whose prospects are worse, or rather who has no prospects at all, has the best chance to come out successful. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Mr. Ballou did not see the object of a postponement. If the delay was for the purpose of obtaining information for the House, he had no objections; if *log-rolling* was the motive, he opposed the postponement. — *Providence Journal*.

If the idea becomes prevalent that the legislation of Congress is controlled by a

system of combinations and *log-rolling*, those who can fabricate the most unjust claims will be found coming forward to crowd the halls of Congress and speculate upon the public treasury. — *Washington Union*, Feb. 10, 1855.

**LOGY.** (Dutch, *log*.) Heavy, slow, stupid. We have received this word from the Dutch, and apply it generally to men. He's a *logy* man, i. e. a slow-moving, heavy man. "He is a *logy* preacher," i. e. dull. The Dutch say, *Een log verstand*, a dull wit.

**LOMA.** (Spanish.) A hill or ridge of hills with a flat summit. A term in general use on the Mexican frontier. The diminutive *Lomita* is also sometimes employed.

**LONE STAR.** The State of Texas, whose flag bears a single star.

Let us not forget the Cynosure of Independence [i. e. Massachusetts]; but bid her a kind farewell for her pilotage through the breakers of the Revolution — blot her out from the galaxy that encircles the Eagle's crest — put the Lone Star in its place, etc. — *A Voice from the South*, p. 53.

**LONG AND SHORT.** Broker's terms. "*Long*" means when a man has bought stock on time, which he can call for at any day he chooses. He is also said to be "*long*," when he holds a good deal.

Short means when a broker sells stocks, to be delivered at a future day. If he owns the stock he sells, or agrees to deliver, he is both *long* and *short* at the same time. The effect of one contract neutralizes or blocks the other, and in reality he is neither *long* nor *short*. If he does not own the stock — which is the case nine times in ten — he is *short*, or what is the same thing, a "*bear*," and it is for his interest to get the price down, so as to be able to buy the stock to deliver at a less price than he sold. — *New York Day-Book*.

**LONG KNIVES, or BIG KNIVES.** A term applied by the North American Indians to the white residents of the United States. It signifies wearers of swords.

**LONG MOSS.** (*Tillandsia usneoides*.) This parasitic and singular vegetation is first seen in company with the palmetto, about latitude 33°. It hangs down in festoons, like the twiny stems of weeping willow. It attaches itself of choice to the cypress, and, after that, to the acacia. These pendent wreaths often conceal the body of the tree, when bare of foliage, to such a degree, that little is seen but a mass of moss. Waving in the wind, they attach themselves to the branches of other trees, and thus sometimes form curtains of moss, that darken the leafless forest of winter. — *Flint, Mississippi Valley*.

**LONG SAUCE.** Beets, carrots, and parsnips are *long sauce*. Potatoes, turnips, onions, pumpkins, etc. are *short sauce*. See *Sauce*.

The Yankee farmer takes unto himself for a wife some buxom country heiress, deeply skilled in the mystery of making apple sweetmeats, *long sauce*, and pumpkin pie. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*, p. 186.

LONGSHANKS. See *Lawyer*, No. 1

LONGSHOREMAN, for *alongshoreman*. A man employed to load and unload vessels, a stevedore. New York.

A meeting of the longshoremen was held last evening to take into consideration the difficulty between themselves and the merchants. — *New York Tribune*.

The strike among the longshoremen, caulkers, laborers, etc., has become quite general, and the work of repairing, loading, and unloading of vessels is almost suspended — *New York Express*.

LONG SHORT. A gown somewhat shorter than a petticoat, worn by women when doing household work.

LONG SUGAR. Molasses, so called formerly in North Carolina from the ropiness of it, and serving all the purposes of sugar both in eating and drinking. — *Byrd, Westover Papers*, p. 28.

LONG SWEETENING. Molasses, so called formerly in New England.

LONG TOM. An apparatus used by the Californians for washing gold from the earth or gravel in which it is found. It consists of a wooden trough from twelve to twenty-five feet long and about a foot wide. At its lower end it widens and its floor there is of sheet-iron pierced with holes half an inch in diameter, under which is placed a flat box a couple of inches deep. The long tom is set at a slight inclination over the place which is to be worked, and a stream of water is kept running through it by means of a hose; and while some of the party shovel the dirt into the *tom*, one man stands at the lower end stirring up the earth as it is washed down, and separating the stones, while the earth and small gravel fall through the sieve into another box, where it undergoes another process of sifting.

When the miners extricate themselves from the temples of pleasure [in the city], they return to their camps and *long-toms*, and soothe their racking head-aches by the discovery of chunks of gold. — *Marryatt, Mountains and Molehills*, p. 236.

LOOED. Defeated. A term borrowed from the game called *loo*; as "Santa Anna was *loosed* at San Jacinto." Southwest.

LOON. (*Eolymbus glacialis*.) The common name for the Northern Diver. *As straight as a loon's leg* is a common simile.

LOOSENESS. Unrestraint, freedom. A Western vulgarism, now becoming common at the East; as, "He goes it with a *looseness*," i. e. acts without restraint. Still more vigorous is the expression, *perfect looseness*.

Ah! my Christian fiends, the devil is amongst us going forward to injure and destroy. He is going it with the *looseness* of an antediluvian relax; and, as Deacon B—— would say, we must n't allow him to come the Japan flummux over us much longer. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 214.

The *perfect looseness*, with which books not on the invoice were sold [at auction], was illustrated by the sale of a volume of Anthon's series, which went off in lots of a hundred, etc. — *New York Express*, Sept. 1855.

Let them go it with a *perfect looseness*, till they burst their brittle strings of life's corsets, and fall to pieces in the cold embrace of death. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 198.

**LOPE.** Common in the West for *gallop*, from which it is contracted.

A sulky ox refuses to move in the proper direction, off starts a rider, who catching the stubborn animal by the tail, it at once becomes frightened into a *lope*; advantage is taken of the unwieldy body by the hunter, as it rests on the fore feet, to jerk it to the ground. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 15.

The mustang goes rollicking ahead, with the eternal *lope*, such as an amorous deer assumes when it moves beside its half galloping mate, a mixture of two or three gaits, as easy as the motions of a cradle. — *Ibid.*, p. 13.

**LOT.** In the United States, a piece or division of land; perhaps originally assigned by drawing lots, but now any portion, piece, or division. — *Webster*. This application of the word is peculiar to this country, and is universally used of a parcel of land, whether in town or country. Thus, we have city *lots*, town *lots*, house *lots*, meadow *lots*, water *lots*, building *lots*, etc. "I have a fine *lot* of cleared land, with a wood *lot* adjoining;" meaning a portion of the forest on which the trees are left for fuel as required. "In going to town, I left the road, and went across *lots*, to shorten the distance," i. e. across the open fields or meadows. "In the first settlement of this country," says Mr. Pickering, "a certain portion or *share* of land was allotted to each inhabitant of the town; and this was called his *lot*. Both *lot* and *allotment* occur in our early laws."

**TO LOVE**, for *to like*. "Do you *love* pumpkin pie?" "I'd *love* to have that bonnet!"

**LOW-BELIA.** The quacks who use the *Lobelia inflata*, or "Indian tobacco," suppose the name to be *Lowbelia*, and it is so written in the description of a patent. The other species, which towers high above its humble relative, is accordingly dubbed *High-belia*.

**LOW GROUNDS.** Bottom lands are so called in Virginia.

**LUCIFER MATCH.** Matches which ignite by friction, also called *Loco-foco* matches. Both these expressions, however, are now being supplanted by the more appropriate term, *Friction-match*.

No rubbing will kindle your *Lucifer match*,  
If the fiz does not follow the primitive scratch.

*O. W. Holmes' Poems*, p. 77.

**LUCKS.** Small portions of wood twisted on the finger of a spinner at the

wheel or distaff. The same word as *lock* when applied to the hair, etc. — *Forby's Norfolk Glossary*. In New England this word is still in use.

Miss Gisborne's flannel is promised the last of the week. There is a bunch of *lucks* down cellar; bring them up. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

**LUDDY MUSSY!** A corrupt pronunciation of *Lord have mercy!* an exclamation of surprise, common in the interior parts of New England.

*Luddy mussy!* can you read? Where do you live? — *Margaret*, p. 52.

**LUGS.** Ground leaves of tobacco when prepared for market.

**LUMBER.** Timber sawed or split for use; as beams, joists, boards, planks, staves, hoops, and the like. — *Webster*. The word in this sense, and the following ones derived from it, are peculiar to America.

**LUMBERER, LUMBERMAN.** A person employed in cutting timber and in getting out lumber from the forest.

**LUMBERING.** 1. The business or occupation of getting out various kinds of lumber, such as beams, boards, staves, etc. "To go a *lumbering*," is the phrase used by those who embark in it.

2. Strolling, lounging, walking leisurely. A vulgarism used in New York.

As I was *lumbering* down the street, down the street,  
A yaller gal I chanc'd to meet, etc.

*Negro Melodies. The Buffalo Gal.*

**LUMBER-WAGON.** A wagon with a plain box upon it, used by farmers for carrying their produce to market. It is sometimes so arranged that a spring seat may be put in it, when it is very comfortable for riding in.

**LUMMOKING.** Heavy, unwieldy, hulking. The word is English, and comes from *lummock*, a lump, which, according to Wright, is still used in Leicestershire.

These little fellows are easier to carry by a long chalk than them great *lummokin'* hackmetacks. — *Slack, Human Nature*

Why, mother! Hannah's counted by Pete Spinbutton, the ensign of the Dogtown Blues, — that great *lummokin'* feller. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II.

**LUMMOX.** A heavy, stupid fellow. Used also in the east of England.

**LYCEUM.** A house or apartment appropriated to instruction by lectures or disquisitions. An association of men for literary purposes. — *Webster*.

In New England almost every town and village of importance has its *lyceum*, where a library is formed, natural and artificial curiosities collected, and before which public lectures are given. They have done a vast deal towards the dissemination of knowledge, particularly among those classes which have not had the advantages of a good education.



**TO LYNCH.** To condemn and execute in obedience to the decree of a multitude or mob, without a legal trial; sometimes practised in the new settlements in the south-west of the United States. — *Worcester*.

Such is too often the administration of law on the frontier, *Lynch's law*, as it is technically termed, in which the plaintiff is apt to be witness, jury, judge, and executioner, and the defendant convicted and punished on mere presumption. — *Living, Tour on the Prairies*, p. 35.

People at last [in 1850] began to talk among themselves of the urgent necessity of again adopting *Lynch law*, since the tedious and uncertain measures of the authorities did not seem to have the effect of terrifying and putting down the disturbers of the public peace. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 310.

**LYNCH LAW.** An irregular and revengeful species of justice, administered by the populace or a mob, without any legal authority or trial. — *Worcester*.

## M.

**MA'AM SCHOOL.** A school kept by a woman; called in England a "dame school."

Mr. Goodrich, when he returned to his native village after many years' absence, says :

I found a girl some eighteen years old keeping a *ma'am school* for about twenty scholars. — *Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 39.

**MACHINE.** The name for a fire-engine among the New York "b'hoys."

You 'll like 'em [the engine men], they're perfect bricks; and as for the *machine*, why, she's a pearl of the East, none of your old-fashioned tubs, but a real tip-top, out-and-out double-decker. Yes, sirree, there ain't many crabs what can take down No 62 and her bully looster crew. — *Yankee Notions*.

**MACKINAW BLANKET**, or, simply **MACKINAW**. A heavy blanket originally used in the Indian trade, the chief post for which was formerly at Mackinac (pron. Mackinaw), and hence the first material for overcoats in the West. See **BLANKET-COAT**.

Outside of the wagons the travellers spread their beds, which consist, for the most part, of buffalo rugs and blankets. Many content themselves with a single *Mackinaw*; but a pair constitutes the most regular pallet; and he that is provided with a buffalo-rug into the bargain, is deemed luxuriously supplied. — *Gregg, Com. of Prairies*, Vol. I. p. 62.

**MAD.** Inflamed with anger; very angry; vexed. "I was quite *mad* at him;" "he made me *mad*." In these instances *mad* is only a metaphor for angry. This is perhaps an English vulgarism, but it is not found in any accurate writer, nor used by any good speaker, unless when poets or orators use it as a strong figure, and, to heighten the expression, say, "he was *mad* with rage." — *Witherspoon, Druid*, No. 5.

*Mad*, in the sense of *angry*, is considered as a low word in this country, and at the present day is never used except in very familiar conversation. — *Pickering*.

This use of the word is provincial in various parts of England. See *Halliwell*, *Grose*, etc.

Indeed, my dear, you make me *mad* sometimes, you do. — *Spectator*.

The General began to get in a passion; and says he, "Major, I'm gettin' *mad*!" "Very well," says I, "General, then I'll keep cool accordin' to agreement." — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 20.

Up stairs I went with them, as *mad* as thunder, I tell you, at being thought a humbug. — *Field*, *Western Tales*.

Jeeminy, fellows, I was so enormous *mad*, that the new silk handkercher round my neck lost its color! — *Robb*, *Squatter Life*.

**MAD DOG.** Sculcap. (*Scutellaria lateriflora*.) A once much renowned quack remedy for hydrophobia, the utter worthlessness of which has long since been established.

**MADAM.** 1. In Plymouth, Massachusetts, and in some neighboring places, it has been and still is the practice, to prefix to the name of a deceased female of some consideration, as the parson's, the deacon's, or the doctor's wife, the title of *Madam*. — *Kendall's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 44. "This practice," says Mr. Pickering, "like that of giving magistrates the title of 'squire, prevails in most of the country towns of New England; but is scarcely known in the seaport towns." — *Vocabulary*.

2. Sir Chas. Lyell says: The title of *Madam* is sometimes given here [in Boston], and generally in Charleston and in the South, to a mother whose son has married; and the daughter-in-law is then called "Mrs." By this means they avoid the inelegant phraseology of "old Mrs. A.," or the Scotch "Mrs. A., senior." — *Second Visit*, Chap. IX.

**MAGUEY.** (*Agave americana*.) A genus of American tropical plants commonly called Aloes or Century plants. They are found in Texas, New Mexico, and California. The different species furnish pulque, sisal hemp, aguardiente, bagging, etc.

**MAHOGANY.** (*Swietenia mahogoni*.) A beautiful tree found in South America, Honduras, and Southern Florida, whose compact reddish-brown wood, susceptible of a high polish, is well known as a material for elegant articles of furniture.

**TO MAHOGANYIZE.** To paint wood in imitation of mahogany.

**MAIDENLAND.** Land that a man gets with his wife, and which he loses at her death. Virginia.

**MAIL.** This word, which properly means the bag in which letters and

papers are carried from one post-office to another, is often used by us instead of the term "post." Thus we *mail* our letters, or send them by *mail*. The English *post* them, or send them by *post*.

**MAILABLE.** That may be mailed or carried in the mail. — *Worcester*. In a suit brought by the government against Adams & Co.'s Express for carrying letters and papers, to the injury of the post-office, Judge Betts stated in his charge to the jury, that "any written communication between one individual and another comes within the term *mailable* matter; and no matter in what shape it is put, it is liable to postage as if carried by mail."

**MAIL-RIDER.** One who carries the mail. In England called a post-man or post-boy.

**MAIL STAGE.** The stage or coach which carries the mail. In England called a "mail-coach."

**MAIZE.** (W. Ind., *maiz*, *mahiz*.) Indian corn. The name of the great staple of native American agriculture, adopted from the Carib language by the Spaniards, and thus imported into the languages of Europe. The earliest dictionary in which I find the word is Florio's *World of Wordes* (1598); the article there is "*Maiz*, a kind of grain or wheat whereof they make bread in India." Its native country is not fully determined, although it is believed to be America. Bernal Diaz speaks of it in Mexico in 1517; and Acosta, in 1570, when treating of the plants "peculiar to the Indies," says that "the most common grain found in the new world is *mays*, which is found in all the kingdoms of the West Indies, Peru, New Spain, Guatemala, and Chili." He adds, that in Castile they call it Indian wheat; and in Italy, Turkey grain; which seems to imply that the plant was also known in those countries. The word is never used in common language in the United States. Indeed few would understand it.

**TO MAKE FISH.** To cure and prepare fish for commerce. A New England phrase.

**TO MAKE ONE'S MANNERS.** To make a bow or salute, on meeting a friend or stranger. The term is applied only to children. Formerly, in New England, the custom was universal among juveniles. Mr. Goodrich, in his "*Reminiscences*," says, "a child who did not *make his manners* to a stranger on the high-road, was deemed a low fellow." — Vol. I. p. 128.

**TO MAKE ONE'S MARK.** To make an impression; to leave a lasting reminiscence of one's self; to distinguish one's self. It is in all probability an English expression.

The most remarkable men are usually those who have lived at some marked epoch in the world, and who, in Providence, were then called out to *make* and to leave *their mark* upon the world. — *Chalmers*.

Hugh Miller is a man of genius, and would have *made his mark* in whatever circumstances he had been placed — *Providence Journal*.

There was a time when Jacob Barker *made his mark* upon the stockjobbers and money-changers of Wall Street. — *Harper's Magazine*, Sept. 1854.

The following is the close of some beautiful lines relating to Miss Nightingale, taken from a newspaper : —

Among the world's great women thou hast *made thy glorious mark* ;  
Men will hereafter mention make of thee with Joan of Arc ;  
And fathers who relate the Maid of Saragossa's tale  
Will tell their little children, too, of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

TO MAKE MEAT, on the great western prairies, consists in cutting into thin slices the boneless parts of buffalo or other meat, and drying them in the wind or sun. Meat thus prepared may be preserved for years without salt.

TO MAKE A RAISE. See *Raise*.

TO MAKE ONESELF SCARCE. To depart, decamp, be off.

TO MAKE TRACKS. To go ; to run. A figurative expression of Western origin.

He came plaguery near not seen' of me, says I ; for I had just commenced *making tracks* as you came in. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 20.

Lieut. Gilliss, giving an account of a skirmish at Coquimbo, says :

Some fifty were killed, a like number fell wounded or were taken prisoners, and the remainder *made tracks* for the city. — *Gilliss's Chile*, Vol. I. p. 334.

MAMMEE APPLE. (*Mammea americana*.) A large round fruit, sometimes the size of a man's head. The skin is of a dull russet color, and rough. The flesh is yellow, and the seeds are from one to four large ones, with a rough shell. West Indies.

MAMMY. The term of endearment used by white children to their negro nurses and to old family servants.

"How ith your ma, honey?" questioned the old woman, rubbing the biscuit dough from her fingers.

"Better, thank you, mammy. She seems quite bright, to-day."

*The Hidden Path.*

MAN EATER. See *Water Dog*.

MAN OF THE EARTH. See *Mechoacan*.

MANANOSAY. See *Clam*, No. 2.

**MANATEE** or **LAMANTIN**. An herbivorous cetacean, the sea-cow. It inhabits the mouths of the rivers opening on the north and north-east of South America and the coast of Mexico; it measures six or seven feet in length; and its paddles exhibit rudiments of nails, by the aid of which the animal sometimes drags its unwieldy body on shore, and crawls up the banks, either to bask in the sun, or to seek for terrestrial vegetables. — *Carpenter's Zoölogy*, I. 339.

**MANGO**. We apply this name to a green musk-melon stuffed with horse-radish, mustard seed, mace, nutmeg, ginger, etc., and then pickled.

**MANGOSTEEN**. In Barbadoes this name is given to the Jujube (*Ziziphus jujube*).

**MANIOC**, **MANIHOC**, **MANIHOT**. See *Tapioca*.

**MANITOU**. (Algonkin Ind. *manitú* or *manitó*, a spirit, a ghost.) A spirit, god, or devil, of the American Indians.

The pride of the Indians is to paint their faces strangely with red or black lead; so that they look like fiends. They are then valiant; yea, they say they are *manette*, the devil himself. — *De Vries' Voyage to America*, 1655.

Every one of the chiefs has his peculiar god, whom they call *Manitoo*. It is sometimes a bird, a stone, a serpent, or any thing else they dream of in their sleep; for they think this *Manitoo* will prosper their wants, as fishing, hunting, and other enterprises. — *Marquette*.

Praying for good, we to Cawtantowit bow,  
And shunning evil, we to Chepian cry;  
To other *Manittoos* we offerings owe,  
Dwell they in mountain, flood, or lofty sky.  
*Durfee, What Cheer*, Cant. 2.

As when the evil *Manitou* that dries  
The Ohio woods, consumes them in his ire,  
In vain the desolated panther flies,  
And howls amid his wilderness of fire.  
*Campbell, Gertrude of Wyoming*, xvii.

As the Arapaho braves pass by the mysterious (boiling) springs, . . . they never fail to bestow their votive offerings upon the water sprite, in order to propitiate the *Manitou* of the fountain, and insure a fortunate issue to their path of war. — *Ruxton's Rocky Mountains*, p. 243.

When the *Manitou* made his children, he gave them buffalo to eat, and the pure water of the fountain to quench their thirst. — *Speech of an Indian Chief, Ruxton*.

**MANOR**. In the United States, a tract of land occupied by tenants who pay a fee-farm rent to the proprietor, sometimes in kind, and sometimes perform certain stipulated services. — *Burrill's Law Dictionary*.

**MAPLE HONEY**. A name in British North America for the uncrystallizable portion of the sap of the sugar-maple, which is consumed in the form of molasses.

**MAPLE SUGAR.** A sort of domestic sugar obtained from the Sugar-Maple (which see). At the commencement of spring, in the northern States and Canada, the sugar-maple trees are tapped near the ground by numerous apertures, and the sap is collected in wooden troughs; two hundred pounds of which afford, by evaporation, fifteen pounds of a brownish sugar, which is capable of being refined in the same manner as the sugar from the cane and the beet. — *Encycl. Americana.*

**MARABOU.** The variety of negro which springs from a mulatto and a griffe.

**TO MARBLE OR MARVEL.** To move off; as, "If you do that again, you must *marble*," i. e. be off immediately. Used in Pennsylvania. — *Hurd's Gram. Corrector.*

The dandy run, and the gals snickered out, and the fellers hawhawed till they was c'enamost dead, to see him *marvell* down the road. — *Hill's Yankee Stories.*

**MARBLEHEAD TURKEYS.** Codfish. So called in Massachusetts.

**MARKET TRUCK.** Vegetables cultivated for market. See *Truck.*

**MARM.** A corruption of the word *mamma*, often used in the interior of New England for mother.

Has your *maim* got that done? — *Margaret*, p. 39.

**MAROON.** The name given to revolted negroes in the West Indies and in some parts of South America. The appellation is supposed to be derived from Marony, a river separating Dutch and French Guiana, where large numbers of these fugitives resided. In many cases, by taking to the forests and mountains, they have rendered themselves formidable to the colonies, and sustained a long and brave resistance against the whites. When Jamaica was conquered by the English, in 1655, about fifteen hundred slaves retreated to the mountains, and were called *Maroons*. They continued to harass the island till the end of the last century, when they were reduced by the aid of blood-hounds. — *Encycl. Americana.*

**MAROONER.** A runaway slave; a maroon.

We were told that on the South Shore [in Virginia] dwelt a *marooner*, that modestly called himself a hermit. — *Byrd, Westover Papers*, p. 13.

**MAROONING.** To go *marooning*, is an expression used in the Southern States. It means, to go on a picnic. The difference between a *marooning* party and a picnic is, that the former is a party made up to pass several days on the shore or in the country; the latter is a party for a day. The expression is of course derived from the preceding noun.

Well, now, Clayton, how considerate of them to go off on that *marooning* party. *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 20.

**MARSHAL.** The ministerial officer of the courts of the United States, with duties similar to those of sheriff in the State courts.—*Kent's Commentaries*, Vol. I. p. 309.

**MARVEL.** A mispronunciation of *marble*, common in the mouths of illiterate people.

**TO MARVEL.** See *To Marble*.

**MARYLAND END.** Said of the hock of the ham. The other is the Virginia end. Maryland and Virginia.

**MASH.** A vulgar corruption of the word "marsh," also heard in England.

**TO MASH.** In machinery, one wheel is said to *mash* into or with another, i. e. to "engage" with it. This is, apparently, a corruption from *mesh*, which is sometimes used in the same sense.

**MASKINONGE OR MUSKELUNGE.** (Algonkin Ind.) An immense fish of the pike species (*Esox estor*), caught in the St. Lawrence and the great lakes. I have seen a specimen taken at Kingston upwards of four feet in length. Dr. Richardson, in his "Fauna Borealis Americana," says that he found none in the rivers which empty into Hudson's Bay or the Polar Sea.

The *masquinonjé* is to all appearance a large species of pike, and possesses the ravenous propensities of that fish.—*Backwoods of Canada*, p. 161.

I was born on the sea-shore in the Bay State, and here I am up among the fresh-water lakes, as much naturalized as any *muskelunge* that was ever caught in Lake Huron.—*Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

**MASS MEETING.** A large or general meeting called for some specific purpose. The word *mass* is prefixed with a sort of *ad captandum* intent, as O'Connell called his large meetings of Irishmen, "monster meetings." *Mass meetings* were first talked of in the political campaign of 1840, when Harrison was elected president. The term is now applied to any large meeting without distinction of party.

**MATE or MATCH.** Used sometimes instead of "fellow," in such expressions as, "I can't find the *mate* (or *match*) to this shoe."

**MAY-APPLE.** A name applied to the remarkable excrescence caused apparently by the puncture of insects, on the immature flowers of the Swamp Honeysuckle (*Azalea nudiflora*). This grows to a great size, as large as an ordinary apple, is of a very irregular form, covered with a fine bloom, and is even eaten. Its irregular form and want of seeds should indicate that it is no fruit, apart from the fact that it is found before the

flowers expand. It is nevertheless considered as the fruit of the plant. The term is also applied to the Swamp Honeysuckle itself.

MAY-BIRD. See *Bobolink*.

MAY-POP. A Southern name for the Passion Flower.

MEADOW. In the United States often applied to mowing lands which are marshy or too wet to be ploughed, and producing a coarse kind of hay, which is called "*meadow hay*," in distinction from that which grows on uplands, which is called "*English hay*." — *Worcester*.

MEADOW BIRD. See *Bobolink*.

MEADOW HAY. See *Meadow*.

MEAN, for *Means*. Many American writers, following Scottish models, make use of *mean* instead of *means* in the singular. But the established practice among English writers, from the time of Addison to the present day, has been to use *means* for both numbers.

It was the best *mean* of bringing the negotiation to a happy issue. — *Marshall's Washington*, Vol. V. p. 546.

MEAN. Poor, bad, worthless; as, "A *mean* pair of shoes;" "a *mean* horse;" "a *mean* fellow."

He'll cut the same capers there as here. He's a monstrous *mean* horse. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 27.

MEAN WHITES. See *Poor White Folks*.

MEAT AXE. A cleaver.

MEAT BISCUIT. The concentrated juice of beef, mixed with flour and baked. It is chiefly used to make soup for travellers, soldiers, etc.

MECHOACAN. (*Convolvulus panduratus*.) A plant growing in sandy fields and on dry banks from Connecticut to Illinois and southwards. The large root is also used for medical purposes. It is also called Man of the Earth, and Wild Potato Vine.

MEDICINE. This word is used in translating certain terms in the languages of the American aborigines which denote not only "medicine" proper, but any thing the operation of which they do not comprehend, that is, any thing mysterious, supernatural, sacred. Hence we have the terms *medicine man*, the doctor and conjurer, or shaman, of the Indians; *medicine bag*, the bag in which his remedies and charms are contained; *medicine feast*, a sort of religious festival, consisting of feasting, singing, dancing, etc., attended by males only; *medicine hut*, the hut in which these feasts are held; *medicine pipe*, the ornamented pipe smoked on these occasions.



**MEDIUM.** A person who professes to be a medium of communication between mortals and disembodied spirits. There are rapping, tipping, healing, speaking, writing, and trance mediums.

**MEECHING or MICHING.** Skulking. This old Shaksperian word is still occasionally heard in New York and New England.

O brethren! I warn you not to make too sure of success, for you may be disappointed. When you fall short of the object for which you jump, you go *meechin* off, like a cat that has missed her mouse. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**MEETING.** A religious assembly, congregation. Among Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers, it is usual to say, "we are going to *meeting*," when speaking of going to their church or place of worship.

**MEETING-HOUSE.** A place of worship of Methodists, Quakers, etc. The following passage in Elliott's recent History of New England, seems to show that the term originated with the Puritans: "The religious services of the Plymouth church were held in the fort, upon the roof or deck of which were mounted the great guns; and it was in 1648 that a '*meeting-house*' was built. They held that a church was a body of Christians, and the place where they met was a '*meeting-house*;' and so they called it by that name." — Vol. I. p. 131.

**TO MEET UP WITH.** To catch up with; to overtake. Georgia.

**MELON FRUIT.** (*Carica papaya*.) The West India Papaw; called also Tree-Melon.

**MEMORANDUM CHECK.** A check intended not to be presented immediately for payment; such an understanding being denoted by the word "*mem.*" written on it. It has been held that the making of a check in this way does not affect its negotiability, or the right of the holder to present it to the bank and demand payment immediately. — *Paige's Reports*, Vol. II. p. 612.

**MENHADEN.** (*Alosa menhaden*.) A fish of the herring kind, abounding in the waters of New England, and as far south as Chesapeake Bay. It is also known by the names of Bony-fish, White-fish, Hardhead, Mossbonker, and Pauhagen. In Massachusetts and Rhode Island they are called Menhaden; in New York, Mossbonkers and Skippaughs. They are caught in immense quantities, and used as manure, chiefly for Indian corn. Dr. DeKay, in his report on the fishes of New York, states that he has known of an instance when "eighty-four wagon-loads, or, in other words, 168,000 of these fish were taken at a single haul" of the seine.

These voracious fellows [the blue-fish] get into a school of *menhaden*, which are too large to swallow whole, and they bite them to pieces to suit their tastes. — *Daniel Webster, Private Cor.*, Vol. II. p. 333.

**TO MERCHANDISE.** In the West they say a man is *merchandizing* who is in trade, keeping a store, selling goods, etc.

**MERCHANT.** A term often applied in the United States to any dealer in merchandise, whether at wholesale or retail; and hence sometimes equivalent to "shopkeeper."

**MERCY SAKES ALIVE!** A common exclamation of surprise, especially with old women, who would probably find some difficulty in parsing it.

*Massy sakes alive, John! where have you been all the morning? What! a lady drowned? Lord-a-massy! What! and a dear drowned baby too! O, dear!—Brooke, Eastford, p. 60.*

**MESA.** (Span., table.) Throughout the whole region bordering on Mexico, this Spanish word is used for a high plain or table-land.

All the so-called *mesa* formations and *jornadas* of this district belong to a distinct system of basin deposits, tertiary or post-tertiary in age. . . . The *mesa*, or table-land character, is exhibited only along the line of river valleys, as high bluffs, the result of denuding forces, subsequent to the original basin depositions.—*Reports on the Pacific Railroad*, Vol. I. p. 84.

The travelling upon the *mesas* was hard and firm, whilst that in the bottom was generally heavy.—*Lieut. Park's Report, Pacific Railroad Survey*, Vol. II

Westward sweeps the wide valley of the river, and at a distance of a league is seen the pueblo of Zuñi. Towards the South a lofty *mesa* with precipitous cliffs. . . . Scrub cedars and piñons upon the *mesa* slopes have furnished fuel.—*Capt. Whipple's Explorations, R. R. Survey*, p. 66.

**MESILLA.** (Span. dim. of *mesa*.) A small table-land.

**MESQUIT or MUSKEET.** (Span. *mezquite*. *Algarobia glandulosa*.) An important tree of the Locust family, found in Texas, New Mexico, California, etc. It bears a long and narrow pod, filled with beans, which are eagerly eaten by horses and cattle. It is also valuable for fuel. On the arid plains it is reduced to a mere shrub, when its roots greatly expand, and are much sought for firewood. The Pima Indians on the Gila grind the mesquit beans, and mix the flour with that of wheat, which adds much to its sweetness.

**MESQUIT GRASS.** (*Stipa spata*.) A fine, short grass, called also Lewis Grass, which grows with great vigor and beauty on the western prairies. It is usually found in very thick tufts and patches, interspersed with other grasses. It is very nutritious and palatable to cattle, horses, and sheep; and has the great advantage of preserving its sweetness, to a certain degree, through the winter. A gum exudes from this tree which is said to be equal to gum arabic.

The *mesquit grass* gives the prairies of Western Texas their great superiority as a

pasture ground, and mark it as forever a pastoral country, whatever in other respects be its future. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 136.

**MESSAGE.** In the United States, an address or communication of a president or a governor, on public affairs, to the legislature. — *Worcester*. Thus we have the President's Inaugural *Message*, Annual *Message*, Veto *Message*, etc.

**MESTEE.** In the West Indies, the child of a white person and a quadroon.

**METAPHENOMENA.** The primordial facts of our being, which, although known by necessity of reason to exist, are not the immediate objects of consciousness. — *Tappan*.

**METAPHENOMENAL.** Relating to *metaphenomena*.

The immediate objects of our consciousness are *phenomena*, and these only are *phenomenal*; while those objects which, by supposition, lie beyond immediate consciousness, are *metaphenomenal*. — *Tappan's Elements of Logic*, p. 12.

**METATE.** (Mex. *metatl*.) A hollowed, oblong stone, in the form of an inclined plane, used by the Mexicans (both Indians and whites), for grinding Indian corn or wheat for tortillas, or cocoa for chocolate.

For miles around the Casas Grandes [on the Gila] the plain is strewn with broken pottery and *metates*, or corn-grinders. — *Bartlett's New Mexico*.

A woman was kneeling upon the ground, under a fig-tree, rubbing the *metate*, and a pretty girl of fifteen was slapping a tortilla between her hands. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 349.

Within the last two days we have seen but slight traces of Indians. Upon the banks of streams we occasionally come across a *metate*. Some appear to have been recently used. — *Capt. Whipple's Explorations to the Pacific*, p. 96.

**METIF.** The offspring of a white person and a quateron or quadroon.

**MIDDLINGS.** 1. A coarse flour intermediate between the fine flour and the inferior quality; hardly known now, when the inferior flour is called "superfine."

2. A term used in the West for pork, meaning the portion of the animal between the hams and shoulders. Thus the Price Current quotes hams, shoulders, and *middlings*.

**MIDDLING WELL,** is a common expression for tolerably well. "How are you, to-day?" "Wall, I'm pretty *middlin'*, jest so as to be knockin' around." According to Brockett, it is used in the same sense in the north of England.

Then it was, "Mr. Sawin, sir, you're *middlin' well*, now, be ye? Step up an' take a nipper, sir; I'm dreffel glad to see ye." — *Biglow Papers*.

**MIDDLING INTEREST.** The middle class of people.

Men of the *middling interest* class are now the best off. Men who have done a safe and small business are now the richest . . . They have felt they belonged to the *middling interest*, and have resolved to stay there, and not cope with the rich. — *Connecticut Courant*.

There is a bank in Boston called the Bank of the "*Middle Interest*."

**MIDGET.** The sand-fly; so called in Canada.

**MIGHTY.** Exceedingly, very. Colloquial in England and the United States, particularly at the South and West.

To the king's house, Knipp took us in, and brought us to Nelly [Gwynn], a most pretty woman. I kissed her, and so did my wife; and a *mighty* pretty soul she is. — *Pepys's Diary*, Vol. II. p. 8.

She untied her hair, then began to twirl the ringlets round her fingers and play with them in a coquettish manner, which she seemed to think *mighty* killing, for she smiled in evident self-conceit. — *London Zest*.

The Doctor's was a *mighty* fine house, fronting the sea. — *Dickens, Dombey and Son*, ch. XI.

His face is *mighty* little for his body. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 184.

What *mighty* hard land it is on this road. The whole face of the earth is covered with stones, as thick as Kentucky land titles. — *Crockett, Tour Down East*, p. 57.

You'll be *mighty* apt to get wet, said a thorough-bred Texan, who stood watching our movements — *Kendall's Santa Fe Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 32.

A girl belonging to the hotel was shouting to the boys, who had been despatched to the barn for eggs, to "quit suckin' them thar eggs, or the candidates 'ould stand a *mighty* small chance for thar dinner." — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 80

**MILE.** Often in the singular with a numeral, instead of the plural *miles*. Mr. Hartshorne, in his Glossary, says its use is universal in England, where the vulgar never give it a plural. "The custom," he adds, "seems to receive countenance from some of our early English poets." — *Salopia Antiqua*.

Start the horses together for a hundred and fifty *mile*. — *Georgia Scenes*.

**MILEAGE** is a very large and even extravagant allowance made to members of congress, and some others of the favored, for travelling expenses, eight dollars for every twenty miles.

*Constructive Mileage* is the same allowance for supposititious journeys from and to the seat of government. The allowance enures to members of the United States senate once in every four years. When a new president comes into office, congress adjourns, of course, on the 3d of March, the new president being inaugurated on the 4th. But the senate is immediately called again into session, to act on the nominations of the new president; and though not a man of them leaves Washington, each is supposed to go home and come back again, in the course of the ten or

twelve hours intervening between the adjournment and the reassembling. For this imaginary journey the senators are allowed their *mileage*; the sum being, in the case of senators from distant States, from \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Many of the senators, in 1845, when Mr. Polk was inaugurated, refused to pocket their *constructive mileage*, holding it to be an imposition on the public.

*Constructive mileage* is allowed when an extra session of Congress is called, whether the senators and members have actually gone to their homes or not, after the regular session. — *J. Inman*.

The *mileage* is a still less excusable abomination. Texas sends hither two senators and two representatives, who receive, in addition to their pay, some \$2,500 each every session for merely coming here and going away again (I would sooner pay them twice the money to stay away) — \$10,000 in all for travelling expenses, which are not actually \$1,000. Arkansas will take \$6,000 out of the treasury, this year, merely for the travel of her senators. When we come to have senators and representatives from Oregon and California, we shall have to negotiate a loan expressly to pay the *mileage* of their members. — *Letter from H. Greeley, N. Y. Tribune, May 2, 1848.*

**MILITARY LANDS.** Lands granted to soldiers for military services.

**MILK SICKNESS.** A fatal spasmodic disease, peculiar to the Western States; now said to be owing to astringent salts contained in the soil and waters of these regions (see Owen's *Geology of Kentucky*). It first attacks the cattle, and then those who eat beef or drink milk.

A few miles below Alton, on the Mississippi, I passed a deserted village, the whole population of which had been destroyed by the *milk sickness*. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West, Let 2.*

**MILL.** 1. An expression commonly applied to one who has experience of the world, is, "He has been *through the mill*;" a phrase equivalent to "He has seen the elephant."

2. An imaginary American coin, the thousandth part of a dollar or tenth part of a cent.

**MILLER.** To *drown the miller* is to put too much water to the flour in making bread. It is, doubtless, an English expression. At all events, Wright says, that *putting the miller's eye out*, is a phrase used when too much liquid is put to any dry or powdery substance.

**MILLERISM.** The doctrines taught by the followers of William Miller.

When *Millerism* was makin' such a noise, the Wiggletown folks raly thought ther was something in it. Old Miss G—— gave up all business, and didn't do nothin' but traipse round from house to house a takin' on about the cend of the world. — *Widow Bedott Papers, p. 123.*

**MILLERITES.** The name of a religious sect, from its founder, William Miller.

The distinguishing doctrines of this sect are, a belief in the reappearance of Jesus Christ on earth, "with all his saints and angels; that he will raise the dead bodies of all his saints, and change the bodies of all that are alive on the earth that are his; and that both these living and raised saints will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There the saints will be judged. While this is being done in the air, the earth will be cleansed by fire; the bodies of the wicked will be burned; the devil and evil spirits will be banished from the earth, shut up in a pit, and will not be permitted to visit the earth again until a thousand years. This is the first resurrection and first judgment. Then Christ and his people will come down from the heavens, and live with his saints on the new earth." After a thousand years, a second death, resurrection, and judgment take place; when the righteous will possess the earth for ever. "The judgment day will be a thousand years in duration. The righteous will be raised and judged in the commencement, the wicked at the end of that day. The millennium is between the two resurrections and the two judgments." — *Evans's Hist. Religions.*

Believing in the literal fulfilment of the prophecies, the *Millerites* first asserted that, according to their calculations, the first judgment would take place about the year 1843. Subsequently other periods were named; and so firm was the faith of many that the Saviour would descend from the heavens and take his followers up into the air, that they disposed of all their worldly treasures, provided themselves with "ascension robes," and waited with great anxiety for the sounding of the last trumpet, the signal for their aerial voyage. Many persons became insane in consequence of the excitement and fear attending this delusion. Others have come to their senses, owing to their repeated disappointments in not being elevated according to Father Miller's promise; and at the present time the sect has happily dwindled down to an insignificant number.

At the Franconia hotel I first heard of the recent fanatical movement of the *Millerites*, or followers of one Miller, who taught that the millennium, or final destruction of the world, would come to pass last year, or on the 23d day of October, 1844. — *Lyell's Second Visit*, Chap. V.

**MILLION.** A vulgar corruption of the word *melon*; as, "water-millions," water-melons; "mush-millions," musk-melons.

**TO MIND.** 1. To recollect; remember. A common phrase at the South is, "*I mind me*," for "I remember." It is also used in Scotland.

I was invited to dine out in Boston; but if I can *mind* the gentleman's name, I wish I may be shot. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 82.

I *mind* once, a good many years ago, Cross and I was over to St. Regis, on a cruise after martin and sable. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 331.

2. To watch, take care of. An English use of the word, although not in the dictionaries.

As soon as girls are old enough to be turned to any account, they are sent out to *mind* the baby. This *mind*ing the baby is, in reality, sauntering about the streets, and sitting down on door-steps, and gossiping with other baby-minders — *North British Review*, May, 1856.

Yes, said Margaret, I will keep Obed. I'll *mind* the beds when the buds are about. — *Margaret*, p. 20.

MINISTER. See *Catfish*.

MINK. (*Putorius vison*.) A quadruped of the weasel kind, that burrows in the earth near water. It is generally to be found on the banks of streams, especially near farm-houses and mills. It swims and dives well, and can remain under water for a considerable time. It preys upon small fish, muscles, etc., but also commits depredations on the poultry yard, and will devour rats, mice, etc.

MINT-JULEP. A drink made of brandy and sugar, flavored with mint, to which pounded ice is added. See *Julep*.

Maryland, anciently written Merryland; so called because the inhabitants, not having the fear of the Lord before their eyes, were prone to make merry and get fuddled with *mint-juleps* and apple-toddy. — *W. Irving, Knickerbocker*.

MINGO. (Creek Ind.) A native king among the Creeks, Choctaws, etc.

MISERY. Pain; as, "They say John Soaker never gets drunk; but he often has a *misery* in his head." Southern.

MISS. Often used instead of "Mrs.," by uneducated people, in addressing or speaking of married women, especially in the West.

MISS-LICK. When an axe or knife cuts out of line, it is called in the West a *miss-lick*.

MISSING. To be *among the missing*, is to be absent, to leave, to run away.

There comes old David for my militia fine. I don't want to see him, and think I will be *among the missing*. — *Sketches of New York*.

TO MISSIONATE. To act as a missionary. Not well authorized. — *Webster*.

Mr. Pickering notices this absurd word, which he found in the *Missionary Herald*.

MISTAKE. The phrase, "*and no mistake*," is used as an equivalent for

certainly, positively ; as, "I will soon pay you a visit, *and no mistake.*" It is now being replaced by *sure*.

**MITTEN.** When a gentleman is jilted by a lady, or is discarded by one to whom he has been paying his addresses, he is said to have *got the mitten*.

Young gentlemen that have *got the mitten*, or young gentlemen who think they are going to *get the mitten*, always sigh. It makes them feel bad — *Neal's Sketches*.

There is a young lady I have set my heart on ; though whether she is a-goin to give me hern, or *give me the mitten*, I ain't quite satisfied. But I rather kinder sorter guess so, than kinder sorter not so. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 90

**MITTS.** Ladies' gloves, without fingers. Used in the same sense in England.

**MIXED UP.** Confused, promiscuous.

Ses I, "Gentlemen, you hear this critter compar me, a free Amarakin, to his darned heathen dumb brute of Afriky." And with that I fetched the monkey a sling that sent him a whurlin' about sixty-five yards, over a brick wall ; and the next mint the Dutchman and his boy was the most *mixed up* pile of rags and splinters you ever seen in one mud hole. — *Widow Bagly's Husband*.

**TO MIZZLE.** To run away ; to abscond. A low word, also used in England.

Mr. Buchanan was in the senate chamber when the tariff was under discussion ; but as soon as Mr. Bagby commenced speaking of the "odious law of 1842," the Secretary of State *mizzled*. — *Cor. of N. Y. Herald*.

A broker, named H. H. D., operated, in a financial way, day before yesterday, to the amount of \$3,000, and then *mizzled*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The Southern men will spend their last cent here ; while the Northern men, if they had won, would have buttoned up their pockets and *mizzled*. — *N. Y. Herald*, May 14, 1845.

In reply to a letter from a lawyer, demanding payment of an account, the debtor declared that he had nothing, and continues :

Whatever I had at one time in the shape of property, has "*mizzled*," as snow before the summer's sun ; or, more scripturally speaking, "as the Philistines before the face of the Lord."

**MOBEE.** A fermented liquor made by the negroes in the West Indies, prepared with sugar, ginger, and snake-root. It is sold by them in the markets. — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**MOBOCRACY.** The sway of the mob.

**MOBTOWN.** A name given long ago to the city of Baltimore, and which the lawless character of a portion of its inhabitants renders a not unfitting appellation at the present day.

**MOCCASON, or MOCCASIN.** (Algonkin Ind.) An Indian shoe, made of



soft leather without a stiff sole, and commonly ornamented round the ankle. — *Worcester*.

**MOCCASONED.** Intoxicated. South Carolina.

**MOCCASON SNAKE.** A snake of bright color, reputed poisonous, of which there are several varieties.

**MOCCASON FISH.** The sun-fish of Maryland.

**MOCK AUCTIONEER.** A man engaged in a mock auction establishment.

**MOCK AUCTION.** A pretended auction sale used to entrap people from the country. New York.

**MOCKER-NUT.** (*Carya tomentosa*.) A species of hickory nut.

**MOCKING-BIRD.** 1. (*Turdus polyglottos*.) This capricious little mimic is of a cinereous color, paler beneath. It inhabits America from New England to Brazil, but is rare and migratory in the Northern States, whilst it is common and resident in the Southern. This bird, although it cannot vie with most of the American species in brilliancy of plumage, is much sought for on account of its wonderful faculty of imitating the tone of every inhabitant of the woods, from the twitter of the humming-bird to the scream of the eagle. — *Encycl. Americana*.

2. See *Nine-Killer*.

**MOLASSES.** Used as a plural in the West; as, "Will you give me some of *those* molasses?"

**MOLLY COTTON-TAIL.** A rabbit.

**MONEYED CORPORATION.** Construed by statute in New York to mean "every corporation having banking powers, or having the power to make loans upon pledges or deposits, or authorized by law to make insurances." — *Revised Statutes*.

**MONK-FISH.** See *Devil-Fish*.

**MONONGAHELA.** A river of Pennsylvania, so called, gave its name to the rye whiskey of which large quantities were produced in its neighborhood, and indeed to American whiskey in general, as distinguished from Usquebaugh and Inishowen, the Scotch and Irish sorts.

**MONROE DOCTRINE.** The historical "*Monroe doctrine*" consisted of two declarations, the first of which grew out of the discussions had in 1823, and earlier, between our government and that of Russia and Great Britain in regard to the proper limits of our North-western territory. The leading powers of Europe up to that time had been accustomed to con-

sider the unoccupied portions of the western world as still open, in point of public law, to settlement and colonization as derelict territory, upon which they might enter and which they might subsequently hold, on condition of occupying the land. For the sake of rebutting this pretension, at least so far as it might be held to restrict our territorial claims in the North-west, the administration of Mr. Monroe took the occasion to assert, "as a principle, in which the rights and interests of the United States were involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power." It is well known that Mr. John Quincy Adams was the author of this "principle;" and the motives by which he was influenced in propounding it are elaborately set forth in the correspondence he had at that period with Mr. Middleton, then our minister at the Russian court, as also with Mr. Rush, our able ambassador at the Court of St. James. His argument was, in brief, that the South American States and Mexico, by virtue of their independence, had acceded to all the proprietary rights formerly enjoyed by Spain; and since the United States claimed to extend their jurisdiction to the Pacific, and thus over the whole of the North-western territory which they had not yet actually occupied, it hence resulted that both the northern and southern continents of America had passed under the civil dominion of the several States among which they were parcelled. In other words, it was contended that the flag of some power now covered and protected all the territory of the western world, which, being thus preoccupied by civilized nations, would henceforth be accessible to Europeans and to each other only on the footing of so many independent sovereignties claiming and asserting a jurisdiction which shielded the whole continent from encroachments under the old and long-recognised rights of discovery and settlement. The "*Monroe doctrine*," under this head, had that extent, and no more.

The second branch of the declaration made by President Monroe, in his annual message of 1823, related to the apprehended attempt of the European powers, combined in the Holy Alliance, to resubjugate the Spanish-American States which had thrown off their allegiance to the mother country. These powers had solemnly declared at Verona, in 1822, their "resolution to repel the maxim of rebellion, in whatever place or under whatever form it might show itself;" as before at Troppau they had publicly announced "that the European States have an undoubted right to take a hostile attitude in regard to those nations in which the overthrow of government might operate as an example." Who does not see that a blow aimed at the Spanish provinces, in pursu-

ance of principles such as these, was equally directed at us, as the revolted provinces of Great Britain, and in which, if anywhere, the "overthrow of government" might be deemed to operate as an "example" calling for hastisement? At the same time Great Britain, by virtue of her constitutional principles of civil liberty, was equally averse to such a policy as was espoused by the Holy Alliance, and, moreover, had already entered into favorable commercial relations with the Spanish-American republics, which she was unwilling to renounce or to subject anew to the hazards and interruptions of war. Under these circumstances it was that Mr. Canning, then the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, proposed to Mr. Rush that "the government of the United States should go hand in hand with England" in resisting any attempt directed to the resubjugation of the revolted colonies of Spain; and it was in consequence of such a previous concert of views between the two governments, as well as in obedience to obvious considerations of public policy, that Mr. Monroe declared, in 1823, that the United States would consider any "attempt of the Allied Powers to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Sept. 18, 1858.

For eight years we have diplomitized with England on the subject, and the question is now more complicated than ever. Perhaps after the lapse of another term of eight years, we may, by some treaty with England, be admitted to a participation in the facilities for interoceanic communication which the isthmus [of Panama] affords. But as to any peculiar, not to say exclusive, advantages in the isthmus, which we have claimed, they cannot be obtained. While other nations were passive, it was thought here that we could secure the isthmus by the insertion of a plank in a party platform, or some other legerdemain. If we now fall back on the *Monroe doctrine*, we shall see the difference between an abstraction and its application in practice. Our theory is yet to be defined and recognised and applied. — (*Balt. Sun*, Oct. 30, 1858.

**MONSTROUS** is much used by the vulgar for very, exceedingly.

And will be *monstrous* witty on the poor. — *Dryden*.

Augusta is a *monstrous* pretty city; but it ain't the place it used to was, by a great sight. It seems like it was rotting off at both ends, and ain't growing much in the middle. — *Maj. Jones's Sketches of Travel*.

It's *monstrous* inconvenient and ridiculous — *Sam Slick in England*.

He'll cut the same capers there he does here. He's a *monstrous* mean horse. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 27.

**MONTE.** (Span.) A game of chance played with cards, of which the Spanish-Americans are excessively fond.

There are other games at cards practised among the people, depending more upon skill; but that of *el monte*, being one exclusively of chance, possesses an all-absorb-

ing attraction difficult to be conceived of by the uninitiated spectator. — *Gregg, Com. of Prairies*, Vol. I. p. 239.

I passed through an open door leading into a back room, where were a small party of men and women betting at *monte*. I lost a couple of dollars, "just to get the hang of the game," as the facetious Sam Slick would say, and then retired to my lodgings. — *Kendall, Santa Fé Exped.*, Vol. I. p. 46.

**MONUMENTAL CITY.** Baltimore, so called from the several fine monuments it contains.

**MOOSE.** (*Cervus alces*.) The Abenaki Indian name of an animal of the genus *Cervus*, and the largest of the deer kind, growing sometimes to the height of seventeen hands, and weighing twelve hundred pounds. This animal inhabits cold northern climates, being found in the forests of Canada and New England.

Lechford, in his early account of New England, entitled "Plaine Dealing," etc., printed in 1642, says :

There are beares, wolves, and foxes, and many other wild beasts, as the *moose*, a kind of deare, as big as some oxen and lyons, as I have heard.

**MOOSE-WOOD.** A species of maple tree, upon the leaves of which the moose feeds. See *Leather Wood*.

Some of the deer were close along shore feeding upon the grass that grew there ; others were nibbling at the leaves of the *moosewood* upon the bank. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 145.

**MOOSE-YARD.** During the winter the moose, in families of fifteen or twenty, seek the depth of the forest for shelter and food. Such a herd will range throughout an extent of about five hundred acres, subsisting upon the mosses attached to the trees, or browsing the tender branches of saplings, especially of the tree called Moose-Wood. The Indians name parts of the forest thus occupied, *moose-yards*. — *Godman's Amer. Nat. Hist.*

In the far away northernmost wilds of Maine,  
Where the murmuring pines all the year complain,  
The stalwart wood-cutter pitches his camp ;  
In his cabin of logs trims his winter lamp.  
And oft when the *moose-herd* hath formed its *yard*,  
And trampled the snows like a pavement hard,  
The woodman forsakes his sled and his team,  
And his harvest of logs by the frozen stream ;  
And, armed with his axe and his rifle, he goes  
To slaughter the moose blocked in by the snows ;  
And many a savory banquet doth cheer  
The fireside joys of his wintry year,  
With the haunch of the moose and the dappled deer.

N. Y. Knickerbocker, Oct. 1858.

**MOP-BOARD.** The wash-board which extends around the floor at the base of the walls in the interior of a house, is so called in New England.

**MOPUSSES.** Cash. An English slang term, not often heard among us.

Whether the man with the *mopusses* is happy or not, he would n't change himself with one in lower circumstances for a mortgage upon an acre of heaven. — *Dow's Sermons*, I. p. 178.

**MORE.** The comparative endings, *-er* and *-est*, are very commonly discarded both by speakers and writers, even from monosyllabic adjectives, and their places supplied by *more* and *most*.

The first edition of the work contained a *more full* vocabulary of English words than the dictionaries which at that time were generally used in schools. — *Worcester, Preface to Dictionary*, 1856.

The Mexican clergy are nowhere famous for strictness of life or purity of character. They have the reputation of being *more fond* of cards than of their breviaries. *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. XVII. p. 179.

**MORGAN.** The phrase "*He's a good enough Morgan*," originated as follows: During the "anti-Masonic" warfare in the State of New York, a great excitement was created by the abduction of one Morgan, who was said to have been confined by the freemasons in or near Fort Niagara, and afterwards drowned in the river. The alleged reason for the reported crime was Morgan's betrayal of masonic secrets. The excitement was worked up to the highest pitch, by the finding of a dead body floating in the river, which was said to be that of Morgan. Even his wife swore to the identity, and a lost tooth was fitted into the jaw. It was afterwards, however, ascertained beyond a doubt that the body was not that of Morgan, whose fate still is a mystery.

It was asserted that the whole affair was got up for political effect. A current story was, that a celebrated politician concerned in the affair, upon being reminded that the dead body found would not pass for Morgan, said that it was "*a good enough Morgan*" for his purpose. The phrase has now passed into general use, and is applied to a really or supposed bare-faced imposition, particularly in politics. — *G. C. Schaeffer*.

**MORGAN HORSE.** A type of horse bearing this name, and coming from Vermont, is familiar to the sporting world. This breed of horses is traced back to the beginning of the present century, and derives its name from Justin Morgan, of Randolph, Vermont, a schoolmaster, who owned the animal from which all have descended.

**MORMON.** 1. The pretended author of the "Book of Mormon."

Behold I were about to write them all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbid it, saying, I will try the faith of my people; therefore I,

*Mormon*, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord.—*Book of Nephi*, Chap. XII.

2. One of the Mormonites, or Latter-day Saints, a religious sect which derive their name from the "*Book of Mormon*."

The *Book of Mormon*, first published in the year 1830, purports to be the record or history of a certain people who inhabited America previous to its discovery by Columbus. This history, containing prophecies and revelations, was engraven (according to it), by the command of God, on small brass plates, and deposited in the hill Comora, in Western New York. These plates were discovered (the Mormons say) by Joseph Smith, in the year 1825; they contain certain hieroglyphics, in the Egyptian character, which Smith, guided by inspiration, translated. It purported to give the history of America from its first settlement by a colony from the tower of Babel, to the fifth century of our era. It stated that the Saviour made his appearance upon this continent after his resurrection; that he planted the gospel here—had his apostles, prophets, teachers, etc.; that the people were cut off in consequence of their transgressions; and that the last of their prophets wrote the *Book of Mormon* on the brass plates above named, "which he hid in the earth until it should come forth and be united with the Bible, for the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the last days."

Smith readily found many to believe his statements, and in 1830 organized his first church of Mormons in Manchester, Ontario county, New York. Other preachers sprang up, who "saw visions and prophesied, cast out devils and healed the sick, by the laying on of hands," and performed other miracles. New churches or societies were formed in other States, until in a few years their number amounted to many thousands. They removed in a body to Missouri, where a most cruel and relentless persecution sprang up against them, which forced them to quit their homes and the State. They then sought a refuge in Illinois, where they founded a city called Nauvoo, in which they erected an immense edifice or temple.

Persecution followed these people in Illinois. They were attacked by armed bodies of men, by order of the State authorities, driven out by force, and compelled to abandon or sacrifice their property. Such as survived the persecution, after traversing the boundless prairies, the deserts of the far West, and the Rocky Mountains, finally found a resting-place near the Great Salt Lake, where some forty thousand of them have established themselves, and chiefly constitute the Territory of Utah.

**MORMONDOM.** The country occupied by the Mormons; the whole body of Mormons.

**MORMONISM.** The doctrines of the Mormonites.

**MORMONITES.** The followers of the factitious prophet Mormon, usually called Mormons.

**MORTAL.** Used in vulgar parlance adverbially for *mortally*; i. e. excessively.

It was a *mortal* hot day, and people actually sweated to that degree, it laid the dust — *Sam Slick*, 3d ser. p. 102.

**TO MOSEY.** To be off; to leave; to sneak away. A low expression. The following is said to be the origin of the word: A postmaster in Ohio by the name of Moses ran away with a considerable sum of money belonging to the government. *To mosey off*, or to run away, as Mr. Moses had, then became a by-word in Ohio, and, with its meaning somewhat extended, has spread over the Union.

After I left you, or rather after you left me, when them fellows told you to *mosey off* before the boat went to sea. — *N. Y. Family Companion*.

**MOSEY SUGAR.** The name of a cake made of sugar for children. Pennsylvania.

**MOSQUITO BAR, MUSQUITO NET.** A net or curtain which, in the Southern States and in the West Indies, is placed over the bed to protect a person from mosquitoes.

**MOSSBUNKER.** See *Menhaden*.

Under the surfaces, and inside the exterior of all these [smooth characters], there may be found as many asperities as there are bones in a *mossbunker*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

**MOST.** A common error in speaking and writing, for *almost*.

Most of us Americans have been to see the "monster nugget." It was found about three months ago at Kingower, one hundred and thirty miles from Melbourne, by four old California miners. They have been four years in the diggings, and had *most* a pile before striking the last prize. — *Letter of J. F. Thornton*, Dec. 24, 1857, in *San Francisco Bulletin*.

**MORTE, or MOT.** (French.) A clump of trees in a prairie; also called "an island of timber." Texas.

It is not necessary that prairies should be entirely destitute of trees; for there are timber prairies, where trees grow in *mottes* or groves, sometimes termed islands, from their resemblance to wooded islands in the sea. — *Mayne Reed, The Boy Hunters*.

Before us lay beautiful prairies, with the smooth-grassed surface, varied here and there by herds of cattle and little belts, *mottes*, and groups of live oak. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 137.

All that was necessary was to keep a bright look-out, and not fall into an ambuscade while passing the different *mots* and ravines scattered along our trail. — *Kendall's Santa Fe Exped.*, Vol. I.

**MOUGHT.** This obsolete preterite of *may* is still heard among old people in the interior parts of New England.

**MOUNDS.** An artificial elevation made of earth of various forms for sepulchral and other purposes, of which large numbers are found, chiefly in the wider bottom lands, and at the junction of the tributaries of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. In the most fertile valleys, and those most easy of cultivation, these mounds are found in the greatest numbers. In England they would be termed tumuli or barrows.

**MOUND-BUILDERS.** The aboriginal race which erected the ancient mounds and other earthworks found in the valleys of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers and their tributaries.

If we admit the correctness of Mr. Gallatin's views [that the ancient agriculture of North America originated between the tropics], we must derive the agriculture of the *mound-builders* from the South, and assign that race chronologically a comparatively low date. This we are not prepared to do; on the contrary, there are many facts going to establish for the *mound-builders* a very high antiquity, etc. — *Squier, Monuments of the Mississippi Valley.*

We need not look to Mexico or any other country, for the descendants of the *mound-builders*. We probably see them in the present red race of the same or adjacent regions. — *Lapham's Antiq. of Wisconsin.*

The red man came —

The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and fierce;

And the *mound-builders* vanished from the earth.

The solitude of centuries untold

Has settled where they dwelt. — *Bryant, The Prairies.*

**MOUND-CITY.** The city of St. Louis, so-called from the number of artificial mounds that occupied the site on which the city is built.

**MOURNERS.** Persons on the "anxious seat" in Methodist churches, and at "revival" meetings, are technically termed "*mourners*;" that is, persons mourning for their sins.

"Crowding the *mourners*," in political slang, means adding some further embarrassment to politicians laboring under difficulties.

**TO MOVE.** 1. For *to remove*. To change one's residence. In the city of New York, it is the custom to hire houses by the year from the first day of May; and as many, especially of the poorer class, remove every year or two, an immense deal of puss-in-the-corner playing takes place on that day, producing many curious scenes to astonish the stranger. The custom is being gradually "honored in the breach" of it; but had Hogarth been a New Yorker, and lived twenty or thirty years ago, May-day would certainly have found a place in his delineations of human eccentricities.

These are great *moving* times. The sovereigns of Europe are being *moved*, much against their will, — and the sovereign people of New York are on the eve of *moving*, according to custom, which has made the May-day sports of this city a very



peculiar feature. Could the sovereigns of Europe only *move* as easily as the sovereigns of New York do, from house to house, palace to palace, etc., they would be well content, and not complain, as many movers to-morrow will.—*N. Y. Sunday Atlas*, April 30, 1848.

Mr. Irving gives the following humorous account of the origin of this custom of *moving* on the first of May.

The memorable emigration [of the people of Communipaw to New Amsterdam] took place on the first of May, and was long cited in tradition as the *grand moving*. The anniversary of it was piously observed among their sons, by turning their houses topsy-turvy, and carrying all their furniture into the streets, etc.; and this is the real origin of the universal agitation and *moving* by which this most restless of cities is literally turned out of doors on every May-day.—*Knickerbocker*, *N. York*.

2. To go, depart. Much used in familiar language, particularly in the phrase, *to be moving*.

As soon as the ceremony was over, "Now," says I, "we must *be a moving*."—*Sam Slick*, *Human Nature*, p. 166.

MUCH. In New England, "He is very *much* of a man," means, he is a man of very good qualities; and when a discarded suitor says of his former mistress, "She is not *much* of a girl after all," he means to imply that she is "no great shakes."

MUD-FISH. (*Melanura pygmaea*.) A small fish on the Atlantic coast, which burrows in the mud.

MUD-DEVIL. See *Water-Dog*, and *Salamander*.

MUD-HEAD. A nick-name applied to the natives of Tennessee.

MUD-HEN. The common name of the Virginia Rail of ornithologists. It inhabits small streams and marshes.

MUD POUT. See *Cat-fish*.

MUD-SILL. The longitudinal timber laid upon the ground to form the foundation for a railway. Hence figuratively applied to the laboring classes, as the substratum of society, in the following passage of a speech of Senator Hammond of South Carolina, which has occasioned much remark:

In all social systems there must be a class to perform the drudgery of life,—that is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect, and but little skill. Such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very *mud-sill* of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build either the one or the other except on this *mud-sill*.—*Speech of Senator Hammond*, March 4, 1858.

It is time that Virginia was turning her attention to manufactures, mechanics, mining, and foreign commerce. No country, no State can live upon one only of the five cardinal powers of production. She must resort to all the five combined, and she is doing it. I say that labor is not the "*mud-sill*" of society; and I thank

God that the old colonial aristocracy of Virginia, which despised mechanical and manual labor, is nearly run out. — *Speech of Gov. Wise of Virginia*, 1858.

**MUD-SILL CLUBS.** The miners and working-men of California who support Broderick in his opposition to the Administration, are preparing for a vigorous campaign, and are already organizing themselves into associations which they style "*Mud-sill Clubs*." — *New York Evening Post*, 1858.

**MUD-TURTLE.** (*Sternotherus odorata*.) The popular name of a reptile common in all parts of the United States. Marsh Tortoise and Mud Terrapin are other names for the same.

**MULADA.** (Span.) A drove of mules.

We recognised the horsemen as a band of robbers, and their object was plain; collected our *mulada* into a compact body, with our pieces cocked, ready for service. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 65.

The Indians frightened the mules, which, turning round, broke the pole of the wagon. As this accident prevented us keeping up with the *mulada* ahead, the conductor went to the assistance of the men driving the herd. — *Wood's Report on the Pacific Wagon-Road*, p. 7.

**MULATTO.** (Span. *Mulato*.) A *mulutto* is the offspring of a white and a negro; a *quadroon*, of a white and a mulatto, being one quarter black; a *mustee*, of a white and a quadroon, or one eighth black; and a *mustafina*, of a white and a mustee, being one sixteenth black. Terms implying a much less admixture of blood are prevalent in Cuba. — *Bult. Sun*, Sept. 3, 1858.

**MULE DEER.** (*Cervus macrotis*.) The largest of the true deer found in North America. It derives its scientific name, *macrotis*, from the great length of its ears, resembling those of the mule, whence it is sometimes called the *Mule Deer*. Its more common appellation, Black-tail Deer, is owing to the black tip to its tail. — *S. F. Baird*.

**MULE RABBIT.** See *Jackass Rabbit*.

**MULEY SAW.** (Germ. *Muhlsäge*, mill-saw.) That variety of mill-saw which is not hung in the gate. It is also spelt *mulay*, *moiley*, *muhley*, the last indicating its origin.

**TO MULL.** To soften and dispirit. — *Johnson*. The only authority cited by Johnson is from Shakspeare :

Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy,  
*Mull'd*, deaf, sleepy, insensible. — *Coriolanus*.

Used in New England.

There has been a pretty considerable *mullin* going on among the doctors, ever sen the quack medicine came out. — *Margaret*, p. 170.

**MUMBLE THE PEG.** A boy's game. It consists in endeavoring to draw out with the teeth a peg driven almost wholly into the ground. The successful one of course wins.

**MUMMACHOG.** (Genus, *Fundulus*). The popular name of the Barred Killifish of naturalists. It is a small fish from two to four inches in length, and frequents the salt-water creeks and the vicinity of the wharves. This Indian name is retained on both sides of Long Island Sound.

**MUNG NEWS.** False, fictitious. I do not know the origin of the phrase.

As many of our citizens who intend to go to California may base their arrangements upon the *mung news* of some of the papers, we conceive it to be our duty to state that most of these letters are fictions.—*N. Y. Express*, Feb. 17, 1849.

**MURTH.** Plenty, abundance. A north of England word.

I think we should have had a *murth* of it this year, but the summer has been a little too cold, and Indian corn must have a hot sun.—*Brooke's Eastford*, p. 76.

**MUSIC.** Amusement, fun. "Jim is a right clever fellow; there is a great deal of *music* in him."

**MUSICAL.** Amusing. New England.

**MUSICIANER.** A musician. Vulgar. Used in Norfolk, England.

The *musicianers* sot down right in front of the stage, and they was led by a handsome young man, whose head went from one side to the other like happy people at a camp meetin'.—*N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**MUSK-OX.** (*Ovibos moschatus*.) This animal inhabits the hilly, barren grounds between the Welcome and Copper Mountains, from the 63d or 64th parallel to the Arctic Sea. In size they are nearly equal to the smallest Highland cattle; but they are more compactly made, and the shaggy hair of their flanks almost touches the ground. Their flesh is tainted with a strong flavor of musk, which is more particularly the case with the bulls.—*S. F. Baird*.

**MUSKELUNGE.** See *Maskinonge*.

**MUSKEET.** See *Mesquit*.

**MUSH.** Indian meal boiled with water, and eaten with milk or molasses. It is often called hasty-pudding, and is a favorite dish throughout the United States. In Hallamshire, England, to *mush* means to crush or pound very small. From this our word may have originated.

E'en in thy native regions, how I blush  
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *mush*!

On Hudson's banks, while men of Belgic spawn  
Insult and eat thee by the name suppawn. —*Barlow, Hasty-Pudding.*

Our hasty-pudding we can eat  
Without the Southern sweetness,  
Though true it is that *mush* without  
Molasses wants completeness. —*Anonymous.*

**MUSK-RAT.** (*Fiber zibethicus.*) An animal closely allied in form and habits to the beaver, inhabiting the banks of streams and ponds. It has a powerful musky odor in summer, which it loses in winter.

**MUSQUASH.** (Abenaki Ind., *muskwessu.*) The musk-rat among the traders in the Northern States is often called by this aboriginal name.

The *mussacus* is a beast of the form and nature of our water rats, but many of them smell exceedingly strongly of muske. —*Smith, Hist. of Virginia, 1629, Booke II.*

**MUSQUASH ROOT.** (*Cicuta maculata.*) An umbelliferous plant and deadly poison.

**MUSS.** A corruption of *mess*, a state of confusion; a squabble; a row. This vulgarism is very common in New York.

"My head aches," said he; "they have put my mind and body both into a confounded *muss*." —*Mrs. Child, Letters from New York, p. 129.*

I saw the British flag a flyin' from the top of the mast, and my first notion was to haul it down, and up with the stars and stripes; but I concluded I had n't better say nothin' about it, for it might get the two nations into a *muss*, and then there would have to be a war. —*Hiram Bigelow's Letter in Fun. Companion*

Mr. Soulé is trying to get up a *muss* with Spain, or with Louis Napoleon. —*May, Downing in National Intelligencer.*

*Mose.* — Satisfaction, eh! Well, if he wants to make a *muss*, I'm on hand. —*Play, A Glance at New York.*

I got into a *muss* down at the store last night, and was whipped, and deserved it too. —*Borthwick's California, p. 153.*

When near their place of debauchation, they came across a gang of b'hoys, with whom they came in collusion; and as that class of individuals are always inclined to have a bit of a "*muss*," that result was very soon accomplished. —*N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

There is, also, an old English word *muss*, meaning a scramble; but it has apparently no connection with the above.

**TO MUSS.** 1. A corruption of *to mess*. To disarrange, disorder; to tumble, rumple. Ex. "I hate to ride in an omnibus, because it *musses* my clothes;" "I'm all *mussed* up." The word is much used in New York.

See that beautiful girl [the morning after a ball]; her hair *mussed* and mossy, except what lies in the bureau; and her whole contour wearing the appearance of an angel rammed through a bush fence into a world of wretchedness and woe. —*Dow's Sermons, Vol. I. p. 151.*

2. (Dutch, *morsen*.) To soil, besmear, befoul; as, "That child has *mussed* himself all over with molasses candy."

**MUSSULMEN.** There are American as well as English writers who thus form the plural of the Turkish *Mussulman*, erroneously imagining the last syllable to be the English word *man*. The correct plural, of course, is "Mussulmans."

A correspondent of the N. Y. Daily Times (Nov. 6, 1851) has carried out the absurdity by coining the term *Mussulboy*! He says:

The Turkish sultan has just sent me one of his sons, Master Abdel Hamid, a little *Mussulboy* of nine years, to be educated in Paris.

**MUSSY.** 1. Disarranged, disordered, tumbled; as, "Although your cap has just been ironed, it looks quite *mussy*."

2. (Dutch, *morsig*.) Smeary, dirty, nasty; as, "These plates have not been wiped clean; they look *mussy*."

**MUSTAFINA.** See *Mulatto*.

**MUSTANG.** (Span. *mesteño*.) The wild horse of the prairies, descended from the stock introduced into America by the first Spanish colonists. He is of various colors, a cream color and piebald being quite common. Mustangs are found in the greatest numbers on the rich prairies of South-western Texas, where I encountered numerous herds, and experienced the not unusual excitement of having a stampede caused by them. They are generally of bad disposition, and hard to subdue. Few are seen west of the Rio Grande.

The wild horse of the prairies, and the invariable companion of their inhabitants. Sparing in diet, a stranger to grain, easily satisfied whether on growing or dead grass, inured to all weathers, capable of great labor, the *mustang* pony seems as peculiarly adapted to the prairies as the camel is to the desert — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 12.

**MUSTANGERS.** Men who employ themselves in catching mustangs for market.

The business of entrapping mustangs has given rise to a class of men called *mustangers*, composed of runaway vagabonds and outlaws of all nations, the legitimate border-ruffians of Texas. — *Olmed's Texas*, p. 443.

**MUSTANG GRAPE.** Indigenous to Texas, probably a variety of the *Vitis rotundiflora* of Michaux. The bunches are small, each grape being the size of an ounce lead ball. A wine is made from it similar to Port, or, according to some, Burgundy.

**MUSTEE.** See *Mulatto*.

**To MUX** is much used in New England for *muss*; as, "Do n't *mux* my crinoline."

**TO MUZZLE.** To skulk. A Yorkshire word.

The child mopes ; she *muzzles* about in the grass and chips. — *Margaret*.

## N.

**NABBER.** In the city of New York, a thief.

**NAKED POSSESSOR.** The occupant of land for a long period without a title, being the manifest, evident, and undisguised possessor, is called in Texas the *naked possessor*.

Ten years of peaceable possession and cultivation, use, or enjoyment thereof, without any evidence of title, shall give to such *naked possessor* full property precursive of all other claims, in and to six hundred and forty acres of land, including his improvement. — *Laws of Texas*.

**NANKEEN.** (Chinese.) A species of light yellow or fawn-colored cloth, made from cotton of the same color (*Gossypium religiosum*), which color is permanent. This article was formerly imported in large quantities from China ; but since the cultivation of the raw material in the United States, introduced by Mr. John Forsyth, formerly Secretary of State, *Nankeens* have been manufactured here, in every respect equal to and cheaper than the Chinese article.

**NARRAGANSETT PACER.** A breed of Rhode Island horses once very famous ; but although we often hear of *Narragansett pacers*, there is now no particular breed so called. In a pamphlet entitled "America Dissected," by the Rev. Dr. Mac Sparran, published in Dublin in 1753, the writer, in speaking of Rhode Island, says : "The produce of this colony is fat cattle, wool, and fine horses, which are exported to all parts of English America. They are remarkable for their fleetness and swift pacing, and I have seen some of them pace a mile in little more than two minutes ; a good deal less than three." According to that veritable historian, Diedrich Knickerbocker, *Narragansett pacers* were well known in the early days of New Amsterdam.

Not so easily did he [Peter Stuyvesant] escape from the crafty hands of a crafty man of Pyquag ; who, with undaunted perseverance and repeated onsets, finally bargained him out of his goodly switch-tailed charger, leaving in place thereof a villainous, foundered *Narragansett pacer*. — *Knickerbocker's N. Y.*

I had an everlastin' fast *Narragansett pacer*. I was considerable proud of him, I assure you ; for he took the rag off the bush in great style. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 218.

**NARY.** A common corruption of "ne'er a." So *nary one*, for "ne'er a one."

It's no use argufyin' the matter, — I'm the ugliest man now on top of dirt. Thar's *nary* nuther like me. — *Widow Bagly's Husband*.

"Arter I got into Mobile, I was bothered and pestered by the people stoppin' in the street to look at me, all dirty and lightwood smoked as I was, from being on the boat."

"I think I 'd a cleaned up a little," interposed tidy Lucy.

"Old 'oman, ain't you got *nary* cold tater to choke that gal with?" — *Ibid*.

Among the many "highfaluting" toasts, sentiments, and mottoes produced on the occasion of the successful laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable, was the following at North Conway:

The Atlantic Cable and the White Mountains, — both monuments of God's power, but *nary* one alike. — *N. Y. Evening Post*, Sept. 1, 1858.

**NARY RED.** A contraction for "ne'er a red (cent)," alluding to the color of the copper cent. — See *Red Cent*.

In the course of a few weeks the new coin [the nickel cent] will be plentiful enough at par; the Spanish coins will go out of the hands of the brokers, just as they already have disappeared from ordinary circulation; and, as regards the old cents, there will be "*nary red*" to be seen, except such as will be found in the cabinets of coin collectors. — *Philad. Bulletin*, May, 1857.

Our citizens last week adopted a new plan for protecting their banks from being run by the brokers. Learning that a broker had reached town from a neighboring city to run the bank for coin, they promptly placed on one side of the bank entrance a bucket of tar and a brush, and upon the opposite, a long, rough looking fence-rail, bearing this inscription, "*Nary red* to *nary* broker." As the broker approached the bank, he read the inscription, glanced at the tar-bucket, and retreated. The bank went on as usual. — *Springfield (Ohio) Nonpareil*, 1858.

**NATION.** A corruption of *damnation*. Immense, enormous; very, extremely. Used in both ways in Old and in New England.

There were a *nation* set a' folks at kirk. — *Carr's Craven Gloss*.

But no sense of a place, some think,

Is this here hill so high;

Cos there, full oft, 'tis *nation* cold,

But that don't argufy. — *Essex Dialect, Noakes and Styles*.

You colony chaps are a *nation* sight too well off, so you be. — *Sam Slick*.

And every time they shoot it off,

It takes a horn of powder,

And makes a noise like father's gun,

Only a *nation* louder. — *Song. Yankee Doodle*.

**NATIONAL.** Relating or belonging to the nation at large, having in view the interests of the whole nation; as opposed to "sectional." Hence the terms "*national* sentiments," "*national* man," etc.

If the little men of the New England States have, in a furor of false excitement, been able to sway and guide the popular prejudices to their own material and political elevation, it is satisfactory to the man of *national* impulses, to reflect that the

passions and mad follies of the hour have not been sufficient to tempt our most gifted geniuses and noble men to forget the advantages and prospects which the Union confers upon and promises to the American people. — *Newark Journal*, 1858.

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATS.** Democrats who profess to entertain no sectional preference.

I have been given to understand that there are two parties in the South, called "National" and "States-Rights" Democrats. If a Southern "*National Democrat*" means one who is ready to welcome into our ranks with open arms, and cordially embrace and promote, according to his merits, every honest Free State man who reads the Constitution as we do, and will cooperate with us in its maintenance, then I belong to that party, call it as you may, and I should grieve to find a Southern man who does not. — *Speech of Hon. J. H. Hammond*, Oct. 27, 1858.

**NATIVE.** At the South, among uneducated people, instead of asking, "What is your native place," or "the place of your nativity," the question is, "Where is your *native*?"

**NATIVE AMERICANS.** In speaking of the *Native American* party, the New York Express says it originated as a consequence of "a meeting held in Carroll Hall in 1843, at which Bishop Hughes made a speech relative to the school system, and advocated a distinct organization, as a party, of the Irish voters of the metropolis, in order to accomplish the end they had in view. This was the first attempt ever made in this country to organize citizens of foreign birth, for the purpose of operating at the election of any candidate." This gave rise, the year following, to the formation of a political party to advocate the rights and privileges of persons born in the United States, in opposition to those of foreigners. The principal measure advocated by it was the extension of the term of residence required by law previous to naturalization from seven to twenty-one years. The extreme lengths to which this party went insured its speedy defeat.

Ten years later (in 1854), a party sprang up with similar principles, known first as the Know Nothing, and now as the American party. — See *Know Nothings*.

**NATIVISM.** The doctrines of the "Native Americans," as a party.

**NATURALIZED CITIZENS.** Those who go through the prescribed process for naturalization; their minor children at that time in the country; or the widows and children of those who have taken the initiatory steps for naturalization, but have died before they were actually naturalized. — *Hilliard's Real Property*, Vol. II. p. 190.

**NAVAL OFFICER.** One of the chief officers of the large U. S. custom-houses. It is the duty of the *Naval Officer* to receive copies of all manifests and entries, and, together with the collector, estimate all duties on



imports, and keep a separate record thereof; countersign all permits, clearances, certificates, and other documents granted by the collector; examine the collector's abstract of duties, and other accounts of receipts, bonds, and expenditures, and, if found correct, to certify them. — *Act of March 2, 1799.*

NEAP. Used in some parts of New England for the tongue or pole of a cart or wagon. — *Worcester.*

NEAR, for *to* or *at*; in these expressions: "The minister plenipotentiary *near* the Court of St. James's — *near* the United States," etc. This Gallicism was first used here in translations of the diplomatic correspondence between the French and American governments; and from the language of *translations* it has been adopted in many of our original compositions. — *Pickering.*

NECK OF THE WOODS. In the wooded sections of the South-West this term is used in speaking of any settlement, place, or plantation.

I am the only subscriber to the *Spirit of the Times* in this *neck of woods*, and consequently my paper is in great requisition. — *Letter from Arkansas, N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

It's no use talkin' about your Polar bar and your grizzly bar. They ain't no whar, for the big black customer down in our *neck o' the woods* beats 'em all hollow. — *Traits of American Humor, Vol. II.*

NEGRO. The various grades of the colored people in Louisiana are designated by the French as follows, according to the greater or less predominance of negro blood:

|            |   |   |   |                      |
|------------|---|---|---|----------------------|
| Mulatto,   | . | . | . | white and negro.     |
| Quarteron, | . | . | . | white and mulatto.   |
| Métif,     | . | . | . | white and quarteron. |
| Mamelouc,  | . | . | . | white and métif.     |
| Quarteron, | . | . | . | white and mamelouc.  |
| Sang-mélé, | . | . | . | white and quarteron. |
| Griffe,    | . | . | . | negro and mulatto.   |
| Marabou,   | . | . | . | mulatto and griffe.  |
| Sacatra,   | . | . | . | griffe and negress.  |

All these varieties exist in New Orleans with sub-varieties, and experts pretend to be able to distinguish them. — *Olmsted's Slave States, p. 583.*

NEGRO FELLOW. A black man.

The price of negroes has already reached that point which is beyond the means of small planters, and they cannot afford to invest their small amounts of spare capital in a species of property that may be swept away by the diseases of the climate, perhaps the very next week after its purchase; and thus in the loss of one *negro fellow*, a three years' saving is gone with him. — *De Bow's Review, Nov. 1858.*

**NEGRO MINSTRELS.** Men who with blackened faces give concerts consisting of negro songs, interspersed with negro jokes, etc.

**NEIGHBORHOOD.** The phrase, *in the neighborhood of*, is frequently used to mean bordering on, near, about.

The Catholic clergy of this city have purchased *in the neighborhood of* forty acres of land from Mr. Fenwick, for a cemetery for the use of the Catholic congregations of Washington. — (*Balt. Sun*, June 27, 1857.

**NETOP.** "This Indian word," says Mr. Pickering, "is still used, colloquially, in some towns in the interior of Massachusetts, to signify a *friend*, or (to use a cant word) a *crony*." Roger Williams, in his *Key to the Indian Language*, says, "What cheer, *netop*? is the general salutation of all English towards the Indians." The word is Narragansett, and means literally, "my friend."

**NEW JERSEY TEA.** (*Ceanothus americanus*.) The leaves of this plant were employed during the Revolution as a poor substitute for imported tea.

**NICELY.** In some parts of New England used, like "cleverly," in the sense of well, very well. Ex. "How's your wife, Mr. Peabody, this fine morning?" "She's *nicely*."

**NICK.** The name already given to the new cent, from the material (nickel) of which it is composed.

The Philadelphia Bulletin, in speaking of the first delivery of the new cents at the U. S. mint, and of the rush for them, says:

The bags containing the *nicks* were neat little canvas arrangements, each of which held five hundred of the diminutive strangers. — May 25, 1857.

The new cent creates quite a furor. It is a neat, handy coin, and will soon supplant the cumbersome copper one. "Nary red" will soon be an obsolete phrase among the boys, and "nary *nickel*" will take its place. — *New York Herald*, May 27, 1857.

**NIGGER.** The vulgar pronunciation of the word *negro*.

**NIGGER HEADS.** The tussocks or knotted masses of the roots of sedges and ferns projecting above the wet surface of a swamp. South.

**TO NIGGER OUT.** To *nigger out* land, signifies, in Southern phraseology, to exhaust land by the mode of tilling without fertilization pursued in the slave States.

**NIGH UNTO.** Nearly, almost.

*I nigh unto burst with madness! I could feel every har on my head kindlin' at the eend.* — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**NIGH UPON.** Nearly, almost.

I got your letter and razor-strap. It's a complete strap as you ever see; and as soon as it was known about here that I had received it, *nigh upon* all our folks have been sendin' to borrow it. —*Maj. Downing, Letter 27.*

Mr. Bedott had been out of health *nigh upon* ten year; and O dear, how he'd altered since the first time I ever see him. —*Widow Bedott Papers, p. 22.*

NIMSHI. A foolish fellow, or one who habitually acts in a foolish manner. Connecticut.

NINE-BARK. (*Spiræa opulifolia.*) A low shrub found in Maine, Canada, Wisconsin, and west to Oregon. Its old bark is loose, and separates in thin layers.

NINE-KILLER. The popular name of the Northern Butcher-bird (*Lanius septentrionalis*) of ornithologists. In Canada and the Eastern States it is sometimes called Mocking-bird. "The name of *nine-killer*," says Dr. DeKay, "is derived from the popular belief that it catches and impales nine grasshoppers in a day." —*Nat. Hist. of New York.*

NIP. A dram.

NIP AND TUCK. An expression signifying an equality, or nearly so, in any strife, but particularly in a horse-race or a game, equivalent to the phrase, "neck and neck."

"Nathan," said a prudent father, "now you're goin' down to Orleans, I've just one thing to advise you on. Do n't play that new game they've got where the jack takes the ace — 't aint natural. I tried 'em at poker, and old sledge, and loo, but they could n't get me down, it was *nip and tuck* between us; but by and by they fotched in that new game, and then I hollered. —*Major Bunkum, Recollections.*

NIPPENT. Impudent; impertinent. —*Hurd's Gram. Corrector.*

NIPPING. Mincing.

O, deary me, it's enough to make anybody sick to see the airs Mrs. Major Coon puts on. Did you see her come *nippin'* into meetin with a shawl on as big as a bed-cover? —*Widow Bedott Papers, p. 35.*

NO — NOT. What the Portuguese say of the Brazilians, the English say of the Americans, — that they are as fond of double negatives as Homer himself. "I won't no how," "it ain't neither," "I ain't got none," "it ain't nothing else," etc., are locutions constantly heard.

NO-ACCOUNT. Of no account, worthless; as "That's a *no-account*, chap I reckon!" "Where did you raise that *no-account* horse?" South-west.

"Miss Bella done learn how to talk," said Sarah, in the kitchen cabinet, "and she look as rosy and peart! her heart ain't broke!"

"Broke wid what?" asked aunt Hagar. "I alwayth telled you that no young mith of mine wath given to hurt herthelf grieving after a *no-account* feller like that down yonder in Richmond." —*The Hidden Path.*

**NOCASE.** An Indian word still used in some parts of New England.

If their imperious occasions cause the Indians to travel, the best of their victuals for their journey is *nocase* (as they call it), which is nothing but Indian corn parched in the hot ashes; the ashes being sifted from it, it is afterwards beaten to powder, and put into a long leathern bag, trussed at their back like a knapsack; out of which they take thrice three spoonfuls a day. — *Wood's New England's Prospect*, 1634.

**NO-HOW.** Not in any way; by no means. Always with a preceding negative, and sometimes enlarged into, "*no how you can fix it.*"

Dod rot that old Mike Hooter. He pertend to be a preacher! His preachin' ain't nothin' but loud hollerin' *no how*. — *Tales of American Humor*.

You don't cook broken down horse-flesh very easy, *no how*. — *G. W. Kendall*.

Miss Sikes had better not come a cavortin' round me with any of her rantankerous carryin' on; for I ain't in no humor, *no how*. — *Story of the Fire Hunt*.

**NOMOLOGICAL.** Relating to *nomology*.

The observations of the senses yield us only limited successions and recurrences of phenomena. These have antecedence in the order of time. But Law, eternal, absolute, and universal, has antecedence in the order of necessary existence, and is an idea of the Reason. It is the Idea of Ideas under the *nomological* conception. — *Tappan's Elements of Logic*.

**NOMOLOGY.** That branch of philosophy which treats of law in general.

This at once introduces us to the Doctrine of Law or *Nomology*, which is the second grand division of philosophy. — *Tappan's Elements of Logic*.

**NON-COMMITTAL.** That does not commit or pledge himself to any particular measure. A political term in frequent use.

A successful politician here [in New York] is either a hack lawyer of thirty years' standing, or an upstart demagogue, who has made his way by dint of sheer brass; either a blind partisan, who knows nothing outside the regular ticket, or a *non-committal* man, who says every thing to everybody, and never gave an intelligent, manly, straight-forward opinion in his life. — *Sketches of American Society, Frazer's Magazine*.

**NON-COMMITTALISM.** The practice or doctrine of not committing oneself.

Much of what Governor W—— says in his message is made feeble by diffuseness; and on many points he either avoids the expression of opinion, or expresses his opinion with so many qualifications as to subject himself to the charge of *non-committalism*. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

He, being somewhat of a wag, handed me "Fearne on Contingent Remainders," which he remarked, with admirable *non-committalism*, was as interesting as a novel, after one got interested in it. — *My Uncle Hobson and I*, p. 20.

**NON-ELECTION.** Failure of election. — *Webster*.

**NON-MANUFACTURING.** Not carrying on manufactures; as, "*non-manufacturing States.*" — *Webster*.

**NON-SLAVEHOLDING.** Not holding slaves. Thus, the States north of

Mason and Dixon's line are frequently designated as the "*non-slaveholding States*."

**NOODLES.** (Germ. *nudel*.) Dumplings or vermicelli. They are used in Pennsylvania, and are made by rolling into very thin sheets the dough, which differs from the Italian preparation by the addition of eggs. These sheets are then rolled up and cut across with a knife. The strips thus formed differ from vermicelli only in their section being square, instead of circular.

**NOODLEJEES.** (Dutch.) Wheat dough rolled thin and cut into strings like vermicelli.

**NOODLE-SOUP.** Soup made of the above.

**NOPAL.** A cabbage palm, similar to a yucca; cooked and eaten by Mexicans.

**NORTH and SOUTH.** Terms commonly used to signify the Northern and Southern, or the free and slave States, of the Union.

The *North*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South*, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. — *Speech of Hon. E. Everett*, July 5, 1858.

**NORTH AMERICANS.** The Northern or anti-slavery section of the American or Know Nothing Party.

**NORTHERN NECK.** The portion of Virginia lying between the Potomac and the Rappahannock.

**NORTHER.** A severe north wind which blows at particular seasons along the Gulf of Mexico, as well as across the vast region lying to the north of it. These *northers* upon the open prairies are exceedingly trying, and, when accompanied by snow or a freezing rain, prove fatal to cattle and horses. Teamsters, herdsmen, and travellers have also been known, in many instances, to perish. I experienced a terrific *norther* on the high plateau of Texas in November, 1850, which was accompanied by snow, and lasted for three days.

Mr. Olmsted, in his "Journey through Texas," thus describes one of these *northers* :

We were suffering with the heat, when one of us said, "See this before us, — what is it, fog or smoke?"

"A prairie fire, I think," said the other.

"Probably it is; but what is this on the hill close by; this is fog, surely? It must be a *norther* coming. Yes, it is a *norther*, listen to that roar! We must get our clothing on, or we shall be chilled through."

First, a chilly whiff, then a puff, the grass bends flat; and, bang, it is upon us,—a blast that would have taken a top-gallant sail out of the bolt-ropes; and cold as if blowing across a sea of ice. We galloped to the nearest ravine, and hurried on all the clothing we could muster. Fortunately, though our baggage was left behind, we had taken a supply of blankets, etc. — p. 168.

**NORTHERNER.** A citizen of one of the Northern or non-slaveholding States.

**NOTCH.** An opening or narrow passage through a mountain or hill. — *Webster*. The *Notch* in the White Mountains is well known.

This gap is not a *notch* or depression in the crest of a continuous ridge, but the extension of the plain narrowed down by bare, rugged peaks of almost solid rock, rising abruptly from the plain. — *Rep. on Pacific Rail-Road*, Vol. II.

Passing down the Chemung and Susquehanna in canoes, they landed, and struck through the wilderness to a gap or *notch* of the mountains, by which they entered the Valley of Wyoming. — *Irving's Washington*, Vol. III. p. 468.

**NOTHING ELSE.** "It ain't *nothing else*," is a vulgar style of phraseology equivalent to "It's that, and no mistake."

*Mosc.* "Lize, ain't you a gallows gall?"

*Lize.* "I ain't *nothing else*, Mosc." — *New York in 1848*.

**NOTHING TO NOBODY.** Nobody's business. This singular expression is common in the language of the illiterate in some parts of the South.

But surely no lady drank punch? Yes, three of them did, . . . and the way these women love punch is *nothing to nobody*. — *Georgia Scenes*.

The way she would make Indian cakes, and the way I used to slick them over with molasses, was *nothing to nobody*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**TO NOTIFY.** 1. To make known; to declare; to publish. "The laws of God *notify* to man his will and our duty."

2. To give information of. "The allied sovereigns have *notified* the Spanish court of their purpose of maintaining legitimate government."

3. To give notice to. "The constable has *notified* the citizens to meet at the City Hall." "The bell *notifies* us of the time of meeting."

The first of these senses, as Dr. Witherspoon long ago observed (*Druid*, No. 5), is the only one in which this word is employed by English writers. They use it simply in the sense of the Latin *notificare*, i. e. "to make known," as in the following examples from Richardson:

His [Duke Robert's] worthie acts valientlie and fortunately atchieved against the infidels, are *notified* to the world by many and sundrie writers. — *Holinshed*.

Such protest must also be *notified*, within fourteen days after, to the drawer. — *Blackstone's Commentaries*.

The two significations, Nos. 2 and 3, in which the direct object of the verb is the *person*, instead of the *thing*, is in accordance with the French use of the verb *notifier*. It is not improbable that they will yet be adopted in England; for the same transfer of the idea from the thing to the person took place in the Latin language itself, in which the word *notus*, known, was also used in the sense of informed of, knowing.

**NOTIONAL.** Fanciful, whimsical. Applied to persons; as, "He's a very *notional* man." New England.

**NOTIONATE.** Fanciful, whimsical. West.

**NOTIONS.** Small wares or trifles. — *Worcester*. A word much used by the ingenious New Englanders.

"Can I suit you to-day, ma'am?" said a peddler from New England, when offering his wares for sale in Michigan. "I've all sorts of *notions*. Here's fashionable calicoes; French work collars and capes; elegant milk-pans, and Harrison skimmers, and *ne plus ultry* dippeis! patent pills, — cure any thing you like; ague bitters; Shaker yalbs; essences, wintergreen, lobely; tapes, pins, needles, hooks and eyes; broaches and bracelets; smelling-bottles; castor ile; corn-plaster; mustard; gardening-seeds; silver spoons; pocket-combs; tea-pots; green tea, saleatus; tracts; song-books; thimbles; baby's whistles, slates; playin' cards; puddin' sticks; baskets; wooden bowls; powder and shot. I shan't offer you lucifers, for ladies with such eyes never buys matches, — but you can't ask me for any thing I haven't got, I guess." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. II. p. 113.

He has invented several other important wooden *notions* out of his own head; and Muffins says there is enough left to invent a good many more. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**NOWHERE.** *To be nowhere* is to be at sea; to be utterly at a loss; to be ignorant.

This gentleman has been for some years at the head of this institution, the special business of which is to educate teachers who shall be employed in the subordinate public schools; and it has just been ascertained that he is lamentably ignorant of the rudiments of an English education; in short, that in "first principles" he is *nowhere*. — *Boston Bee*.

**NUB.** 1. A Knob. New England.

2. The *nub* of a story is the point or gist of it.

**NUBBINS.** Imperfectly formed ears of Indian corn.

"Aunt Peggy brought in some of the early corn this morning, mother. Did you see it?"

"Yes, your father says it is a humbug. There are nothing but little *nubbins*, with not more than a dozen grains to the ear."

Precisely such badly filled *nubbins* your children's minds are fated to become, if you adopt the forcing, hot-bed system with them — *The Hidden Path*.

**NULLIFICATION.** Some years ago, when the system of high protective

duties on foreign imports was predominant in the national councils, the politicians of South Carolina — whose main article of export is cotton — were strongly desirous of free trade with England and France, the principal consumers of that article believing that the consumption of it in those countries would be augmented by an augmentation of the import of their fabrics. Those politicians thought themselves aggrieved therefore by the protection given in the United States to the manufacture of fabrics coming into competition with those of England and France. But finding Congress resolute in adhering to the protective tariff, the South Carolina politicians became so exasperated that at last they proclaimed their intention to *nullify* the tariff, — that is, to admit British and French goods into their ports free of duty, and not to permit the exercise of custom-house functions in their State. In other words, *nullification*, in the case of South Carolina, was simply an act, or at least a threat, of open rebellion.

Somebody must go ahead, and look after these matters to keep down *nullification*, and take care of the General [Jackson] when he gets into his tantrums, and keep the great democratic party from splitting in two. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 218.

**NULLIFIER.** One who believes in or maintains the right of a State to refuse compliance with a law enacted by the legislature of the whole Union.

This term was also applied to a sort of shoe, made like a decapitated boot, brought into fashion in the “nullification” times.

**NURLY.** A corrupt pronunciation and orthography of *gnarly*, i. e. gnarled. Times are mopish and *nurlly*. — *Margaret*, p. 314.

**NUTMEG STATE.** A nickname given to the State of Connecticut, in allusion to the story that wooden nutmegs are there manufactured for exportation.

## O.

**OAK BARRENS.** Straggling forests of oak trees, where the soil is very poor, and the trees small, stunted, and gnarled. The *oak barrens* differ from the “oak openings,” inasmuch as the latter are usually on good soil, and hence thrifty.

Our march to-day lay through straggling forests of the kind of low, scrubbed trees, called post-oaks and black-jacks. The soil of these *oak barrens* is loose and unsound; being little better than a mere quicksand; in which, in rainy weather, the horse's foot slips, and now and then sinks in a rotten, spongy turf, to the fetlock. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*, p. 95.



**OAK OPENINGS.** A characteristic feature in all the North-western States are the *oak openings*. These are forests of short, thinly scattered oak trees. The trees are so diminutive that generally but one length for rails can be cut between the ground and the limbs. See *Opening*.

The grounds about the mounds are covered with scattered oak trees, commonly called *oak openings*, and thickly overgrown with small bushes. — *Lapham's Antiqs. of Wisconsin*, p. 31.

Having passed the skirt of the woodlands, we ascended the hills, taking a course through the *oak openings*, where the eye stretched over wide tracts of hill and dale, diversified by forests, groves, and clumps of trees. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*, p. 77.

**OBLIGED TO BE.** Must be; as, "This is *obliged to be* a fever and ague country." Comp. the analogous vulgarism, "*bound to be*."

**OBLIGEMENT.** This antiquated word is still used by old people in New England. — *Pickering*.

**OBSCUTELY.** Obliquely. A factitious word used in New England.

**OBTUSITY.** Obtuseness. New England.

**TO OCCASION, or 'CASION.** To go about asking for work; i. e. to ask if employers have any *occasion* for one's services. Maryland.

**OCCUPYING CLAIMANT.** One who claims land by virtue of occupation of the same under the land systems of various States.

**OCELOT.** (Mexican, *ocelotl*.) A beautiful but savage animal, holding a middle rank between the leopard and the common cat, the *Felis pardalus* of Linnæus. The body is about three feet in length, and the tail about one; height, about eighteen inches. It is a native of various parts of South America, and is thought to extend as far north as Texas. Called also Tiger Cat.

**ODD STICK.** An eccentric person, an "odd fish." "John Randolph was an *odd stick*."

**OF.** 1. An action of the organs of sense may be either involuntary or voluntary. Accordingly we say *to see*, *to hear*, to denote an involuntary act; and *to look at*, *to hearken* or *listen to*, to denote a voluntary one. With regard to the other senses, we are not so well provided with words; but some people, prompted apparently by a feeling of this deficiency, endeavor to supply it by construing the verbs *to feel*, *to taste*, *to smell*, with the preposition *of*, to signify a voluntary act. Hence to feel, taste, smell *of* a thing, is to do so intentionally. This corruption is rarely met with in writing.

In the course of the forenoon, a few women came around our tent, *felt of it*, and peeped through the cracks to see Mrs. Perkins. — *Perkins's Residence in Persia*, p. 133.

2. In the colloquial language of New England, this preposition, frequently corrupted into *on*, is used after a gerund or active participle; as, "Ebenezer is coming to stick our pig; but he 'll want a quarter for doin' of it (or *on it*)."

Whereas, many negroes and other slaves absent themselves from their masters' service, and run out into the woods and there remain, killing and destroying of hogs and cattle belonging unto the people of this province, &c. — *Maryland Statutes*. Act of 1751.

**OFF THE HANDLE.** To *fly off the handle* is to fly into a passion. To *go off the handle* is to give up the ghost, to die. The allusion is to the head of an axe.

A poor man in this city had a fortune left him by a distant and wealthy relative, who went *off the handle* in England, rather unexpectedly. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**OFFAL.** This word, among pork-butchers and curers in the West, implies the liver and lights, or more technically the head and pluck, liver, &c., of the animal; whereas, in correct English, it is limited to the refuse thrown to the dogs. An English reader would be much shocked at the mention of a dish of *offal*.

**OFFICE-HOLDER.** A government official. Used frequently as a term of reproach.

**OFFICE-HOLDING.** The holding of an office under government.

**OFFICE-HUNTER.** A seeker after public office.

**OFFICE-HUNTING.** A seeking after public office. That both the practice and the name for it are acquiring all the respectability that age can bestow, is evident from the date of the following extract:

*Office-hunting* — The decease of Col. Freeman, late Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, the salary of which is \$3,000 a year, has caused a great stir at Washington. There are said to be about fifty applicants for the place, among whom are a dozen or two members of Congress. — *Niles's Register*, March 20, 1824.

**OFFISH.** Distant or unapproachable in manners.

**OFFSET.** In accounts, a sum, account, or value *set off* against another sum or account, as an equivalent. — *Webster*.

This word is generally used in place of the English term *set-off*. Mr. Pickering says, "it is also very common in popular language, in the sense of an *equivalent*." None of the English dictionaries have the word in any sense except that of "shoot from a plant."

The expense of the frigates had been strongly urged ; but the saving in insurance, in ships and cargoes, and the ransom of seamen, was more than an *offset* against this item. — *Marshall's Washington*.

Thanksgiving was an anti-Christmas festival, established as a kind of *offset* to that. — *Margaret*, p. 61.

**TO OFFSET.** To set one account against another ; to make the account of one party pay the demand of another. — *Webster*.

**OJO** (pron. *oho*). This Spanish term means an eye, and figuratively a spring in a plain. In Texas, New Mexico, and California, these springs greet the thirsty traveller as the oases do in Africa. A few rushes or rank grass, rising above the sterile wastes, guide him to the spot.

**OKRA.** (*Hibiscus esculentis*.) A tropical plant, the pods of which are used in the mucilaginous soup called *gumbo*. — *Worcester*.

**OLD COUNTRY.** A term applied to Great Britain, originally by natives from that country, but now understood and used generally in the United States.

Mr. Goodrich, in describing the people of New England at the period of the Revolution, says :

The Episcopalians had indeed one more tie than other men to the *old country*, and that was a powerful one. England was not only their mother in things secular, but in things sacred. — Vol. I. p. 192.

**OLD COUNTRYMAN.** A native of England, Scotland, Ireland, or Wales. The term is never applied to persons from the continent of Europe.

**OLDERMOST.** Oldest. Used at the West.

Ain't that *oldermost* stranger a kinder sort a preacher ? — *Carleton, The New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 70

**OLD DOMINION.** The State of Virginia. Sometimes called the "*Ancient Dominion*." The name probably arose from the circumstance that Virginia was the original name for all the English colonies in America.

**OLD HICKORY.** A nickname applied to General Jackson, in allusion to his tough, unyielding disposition.

**OLD HOSS.** A familiar expression used in accosting a person, equivalent to "old fellow." Western.

*Old hoss*, when analyzed, is found to be the tenderest appellation of a biped juvenile without hoofs. — *Speech of Samuel H. Cox*.

**OLD MAN.** 1. *The old man* is a term more common than respectful, used by "Young America" for father.

2. In the South and West, instead of saying, for instance, "Old Mr. Smith," it is customary to say, "*Old man* Smith."

OLD POD. An old man.

OLD RYE. Old whiskey distilled from rye.

I do n't know whether Mark took a drop or not; but they generally keep a barrel of *old rye* in the lumber shanties, and my opinion is that he was invited to take a horn. —*Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 198.

OLD SLEDGE. A Southern and Western name for the game at cards commonly called All Fours.

I played a pretty stiff game of *old Sledge*, or, as he called it, all fours; for I played every night. —*Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 88.

With professional flat-boatmen their acme of felicity is a game of *old sledge* enlivened by the fiddle. —*Remembrances of the Mississippi, Harper's Magazine*.

OLD-WIFE, or OLD-SQUAW. (*Anas glacialis*.) The popular name of a brown duck, one of the most common throughout North America, the Long-tailed Duck of Pennant.

OLYCOOK. (Dutch, *oliekoek*, oil-cake.) A cake fried in lard. A favorite delicacy with the Dutch, and also with their descendants in New York. There are various kinds, as dough-nuts, crullers, etc.

The table was always sure to boast of an enormous dish of balls of sweetened dough, fried in hogs-fat, and called dough-nuts or *olykoeks*. —*Knickerbocker's New York*.

ONCE AND AGAIN. Occasionally, sometimes. A Southern phrase, equivalent to "once in a while."

ON EEND, i. e. *on end*. Excited, astonished, enraged.

ONE-HORSE. In the West, by an obvious agricultural figure, this term is applied to any thing small or diminutive, as a "*one-horse* bank," a "*one-horse* church," meaning a little bank or church. So the phrase "*one-horse* lawyer" is applied to a mean, pettifogging fellow. A clergyman, deprecating the use of such expressions as "confound it," called them "*one-horse* oaths."

Every State in the Union should rigidly proscribe and prohibit the establishment of the wild-cat and *one-horse* banking concerns which have produced so much mischief, and brought discredit on all banking institutions. —*New York Sun*.

On Friday last the engineer of a fast train was arrested by the authorities of a *one-horse* town in Dauphin county, Pa., for running through the borough at a greater rate of speed than is allowed by their ordinances. Having neglected, however, to give publicity to these ordinances, they could not impose any fine; and their discomfiture was aggravated by the malicious excuse of the engineer, that "he did n't know there was a town there!" —(*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, 1858.

ON HAND. At hand, present. A colloquial expression, borrowed from the shop, in frequent use.

The anti-Sabbath meeting, so long talked of, has at length taken place in Boston. About three hundred females were *on hand*.—*N. Y. Express*.

If our numerous subscribers and the public will be *on hand* about 5 o'clock this evening, we can give them the European papers by the America, containing doubtless the most critical intelligence ever transmitted to this country. So be ready.—*Burgess, Stringer & Co., 222 Broadway*.

We appeal to every man who has a right to vote in New Hampshire, but especially in the 1st and 2d districts, to be *on hand* next Tuesday to cast his ballot for Peace, Prosperity, and Freedom.—*N. Y. Tribune*, March 10, 1849.

A broker from Wall street was *on hand* at the meeting, and tried to pray, but, from want of practice, could only utter disjointed sentences about the money market, etc.—*Doesticks*.

**ON THE COAST.** Near, close at hand. A nautical expression, in common use in Nantucket.

**ONPLUSH**, for *nonplus*. Used in the Southern States.

You know I tuck dinner at the Planters. Well, I was put a leetle to the *onplush* by that old nigger feller that waits on the table there. I did not know what to make of him —*Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 63.

**ONST** (pron. *wunst*). Once. A common vulgar pronunciation, especially in the West. And so *twiste* for "twice."

**ONTO.** A preposition bearing the same relation to *on*, that *into* does to *in*. Although used here much more frequently than in England, it is not peculiar to America.

When the stack rises two feet high to be conveniently forked *onto* from the ground.—*Marshall, Rural Econ., Yorkshire*, Vol. II. p. 144.

Mr. Pickering quotes the following as the only example he has seen in an American book :

Take all your cigars and tobacco, and in some calm evening carry them *onto* the common.—*Dr. B. Waterhouse, Lecture on Tobacco*.

In descriptions of machinery, etc., the term is in very general use.

The improvement consists in casting a boss of soft metal *onto* the metallic tube:—*Patent Office Report for 1854, Part I.* p. 480.

The nature of this invention consists in the use of a spring clamp, etc, by means of which the back of the shoe is securely held while being pulled *onto* the foot of it.—*Ibid.* p. 533.

**ON YESTERDAY.** A corruption in common use among editors and congressmen, who seem to have forgotten that *yesterday* is an adverb as well as a noun.

It was the intention to send in the Treasury Report, which has been so long delayed, *on yesterday*.—*N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 9, 1852.

I supposed that the house listened to the remarks of the gentleman from Texas, *on yesterday*; and therefore it is not necessary for me to relate the points he made.—*Speech of Mr. Brooks*, July 7, 1852.

Mr. Speaker, when I arose *on yesterday*, it was my intention merely to explain my position, etc. — *Speech of Mr. Quinnan*, Dec. 18, 1856.

**OPENING.** In the Western States, a term applied to thinly wooded spaces without underwood, so called to distinguish them from the forests which are thickly wooded. These openings are generally covered with small oaks.

Accordin' to the Bible, God put the first man and woman together in a most beautiful garden, in which all things excellent and pleasant was to be found, — some such place as these *openings*, I reckon. — *Cooper's Oak Openings*, p. 225.

**OPINUATED.** Opinionative, conceited. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**OPOSSUM.** (Virginia Ind.) An *opassom* hath a head like a swine, and a taile like a rat, and is of the bignesse of a cat. Under her belly she hath a bagge wherein she lodgeth, carrieth, and suckleth her young. — *Smith's Historie of Virginia*.

**OREGON GRAPE.** Frequently mentioned by explorers in Oregon; the name of the plant which yields it is not given.

**ORGANIC.** Which organizes into a political, legislative, or social body; as, the *organic* law of a Territory or State. A word which has recently come into very common use.

The powers of the corporation of Washington are only those which are conferred by the *organic* law, the charter. — *Message of Mayor of Washington*, May 26, 1857.

**ORTOLAN.** See *Bobolink*.

**OSWEGO TEA.** (*Monarda didyma*.) A medicinal plant prepared by the Shakers for its aromatic and stomachic properties.

**OUCH!** Oh! ah! An exclamation of pain. Much used at the South.

**OUGHT.** As this verb is defective, and has no inflection to distinguish past from present time, illiterate persons often attempt to supply the deficiency by the use of auxiliaries. Hence the expressions, *don't ought*, *had ought*, *hadn't ought*. Mr. Peggo notices the two last among the vulgarisms of London.

Now, you *hadn't ought* to be so stingy with such charming daughters as you've got. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 67.

Peter Cram is an impostor and ignoramus, and you *hadn't ought* to have recommended him. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Vol. XVII.

"The luggage must be brought in," said the elderly gentleman "Yes! I should think it *had oughter*," observed the young man in reply. "I should bring it in, if it was mine." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 96.

**OURN**, for *ours*. A vulgarism frequently heard, which is also common in the local dialect of London.

TO OUT. To “*out the candle*” means, at the South, to put out the candle.

OUTER. Out of. “*Whar are you from outer?*” is a common expression in Kentucky and the neighboring States, meaning, Where do you come or hail from?

OUT OF FIX. Disarranged; in a state of disorder. *Out of kilter* is used in the same sense.

The week was the longest one ever was. It seemed to me that the axletree of the world wanted greasin’ or somethin’ or other was *out of fix*, for it did n’t seem to turn round half so fast as it used to do — *Maj. Jones’s Courtship*, p. 80.

OUTFIT. Allowance to a public minister of the United States on going to a foreign country, which cannot exceed a year’s salary. — *Worcester*.

OUTSIDER. A term applied by those in office, or in any association, to those outside of it.

A large number of *outsiders* have gone to the free-soil convention at Buffalo. — *Lowell Journal*.

OVER, for *under*. In these expressions, “He wrote *over* the signature of Junius;” “He published some papers *over* his own signature.” A few of our writers still countenance this unwarrantable innovation; but the principle on which it is defended would unsettle the whole language. The use of the word *under*, in phrases like those above mentioned, is as well established as any English idiom. — *Pickering*.

Had our friend U., of Philadelphia, duly meditated this matter, he never would have sent us a letter with such an unpoetical expression in it as the very common blunder of “*over the signature*,” for the metaphorical phrase originally derived from the ensign of the soldier, the device of the knight, the armorial bearing of the baron, the totem, if you please, of the Indian sachem, under which he presents himself to the world. U., as a lawyer, must at least be more or less familiar with the phrase, “given under my hand and seal,” as a true English idiom, albeit the hand and seal (which in this instance constitute “the signature”) are placed at the bottom of the document. We do not talk of a vessel sailing “*over*” the flag of the United States, when her ensigns are sent below at sunset! — *N. Y. Lit. World*.

OVERCUP WHITE OAK. See *Burr Oak*.

OVERLY. Excessively. “Is old man Boone rich?” “Why, not *overly* so.” Western.

OVER AND ABOVE. Exceedingly; very. “I don’t think our friend Phineas is *over and above* scrupulous as to how he makes his money.”

OVERCROP. A planter or farmer is said to *overcrop* himself when he plants or “seeds” more ground than he can attend to.

OVERSLAUGH. (Dutch, *overslag*.) A bar, in the marine language of the Dutch. The *overslaugh* in the Hudson River, near Albany, on which

steamboats and other vessels often run aground, is, I believe, the only locality to which this term is now applied among us.

**TO OVERSLAUGH.** (Dutch, *overslaan*.) To skip over, pass over, omit. A word used by New York politicians, to signify that the direct line of elevation in office is not observed, and especially when an "outsider" is appointed over the heads of those already in office.

Mr. Polk intended making Gen. Butler commander-in-chief, and to drop Gen. Scott. But it was found that public opinion would not be reconciled to *overslaughing* Taylor, and he [Gen. Taylor] was nominated. — *Washington Correspondent*, N. Y. *Com. Adv.*, Oct. 21, 1846.

The attempt to *overslaugh* officers entitled to rank in the highest grade in the service, is about to be repeated in a somewhat different way in a lower grade, and we desire to call attention to the facts. — *N. Y. Courier and Enq.*, Oct. 1848.

If the conspiracy of the Calhounites with a few doughfaces of the North to *overslaugh* him [Benton] succeeds, it will render him the stronger in Missouri, and make his reelection to the Senate more certain. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 20, 1849.

**TO OVERRUN.** To run over.

Economy, Rupp's community near Beaver, was lately *overrun* by a delighted traveller, etc. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 16, 1849.

**TO OVERTURE.** To propose. A word in common use in the Presbyterian church, in speaking of laying a subject before an ecclesiastical body for its consideration.

**OVER THE LEFT.** An expression used to give to the words it accompanies a meaning directly opposite to that which they would otherwise have. Common in England.

At a county court held in Hartford, Sept. 4th, 1705,

Whereas James Steel did commence an action against Bevel Waters (both of Hartford), in this court, upon hearing and tryall whereoff the court gave judgment against the said Waters (as in justice they think they ought), upon the declaring the said judgment the said Waters did review to the court in March next, that being granted and entered, the said Waters, as he departed from the table, said, "God bless you *over the left shoulder*."

The court ordered a record thereof to be made forthwith.

A true copie : Test

CALEB STANLEY, Clerk.

At the next court Waters was tried for contempt, for saying the words recited, "so cursing the court;" and on verdict, fined £5. He asked a review at the court following, which was granted; and, pending trial, the court asked counsel of the Rev. Messrs. Woodbridge and Buckingham, the ministers of the Hartford churches, as to 'the common acceptation' of the offensive phrase. Their reply constitutes a part of the record, and is as follows :

We are of opinion that these words, said on the other side to be spoken by Bevel Waters, include [1] prophaneness, by using the name of God, that is holy, with such ill words whereto it was joyned; [2] that they carry great contempt in them, arising to the degree of an imprecation or a curse, the words of a curse being the most contemptible that can ordinarily be used.

March 7th, 1705-6.

T. WOODBRIDGE,  
T. BUCKINGHAM.



The former judgment was affirmed on review. This, it is believed, is the earliest instance of the use of this phrase to be met with, at least in this country.

OWDACCIOUS, for *audacious*. Southern and Western.

He had a daughter Molly, that was the most enticin', heart-distressin' creature that ever made a feller get *owdacious*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Why, Major, you would n't take such a likely gall as that to New York? The abolitionists would have her out of your hands quicker than you could say Jack Robinson. I was never so *owdiciously* put out with the abominable abolitionists before. It was enough to make a man what was n't principled agin swearin' cuss like a trooper. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

OYSTER-PLANT. Salsify; a plant of the genus *tragopogon*, so called from its resemblance in taste, when cooked, to the oyster. It is also called the Vegetable Oyster.

OYSTER-SHUCKER. An oyster-opener. Southern.

OYSTER-FISH. See *Toad-Fish*.

## P.

PAAS. Pron. *paws* with *s* hard. (Dutch, *Paasch*.) This Dutch name is commonly applied to the festival of Easter, in the State of New York.

PAAS BLOOMACHEE, i. e. Easter flower. (*Narcissus pseudo-narcissus*.) Not the Pasque Flower of botanists, but the common Yellow Daffodil.

PAAS EGGS. Hard-boiled eggs cracked together by New York boys at the Easter season. They are often dyed of various colors in boiling.

TO PACK. To transport in packs or packages; and hence, simply to carry. "Are you going to *pack* that rock all the way home?" said to a person who had secured a bit of stone containing a fine fossil. Western.

We reached Bull Creek about two o'clock, and there gave the mules some rest. Just before reaching it, Joe killed an antelope, of which we had seen several. We *packed* the hams and shoulders to camp. — *T. A. Culbertson, in Fifth Smithsonian Report*, p. 91.

PADDLE. A wooden instrument with which negroes are punished, shaped like the paddle of a canoe, with holes bored through the blade. See *Cobb*.

TO PADDLE ONE'S OWN CANOE. A figurative Western phrase, meaning to make one's own way in life, to be the architect of one's own fortunes.

Voyager upon life's sea,  
 To yourself be true,  
 And where'er your lot may be,  
*Paddle your own canoe.*

Leave to Heaven, in humble trust,  
 All you will to do ;  
 But if you succeed, you must  
*Paddle your own canoe.*

*Harper's Magazine*, May, 1854.

**PAINT.** In some of the Southern States, a horse or other animal which is spotted is called a *paint*.

**PAINTER**, a corruption of *panther*. The popular name of the cougar or panther. See *Puma*.

"You don't know the way," said Obed ; "snakes 'll bite ye ; there's *painters* in the woods, and wild-cats and owls." — *Margaret*, p. 27.

**PAIR OF STAIRS.** An expression often used for a *flight* of stairs.

**PALE-FACES.** A term applied, or said to be applied, by the American Indians to the whites.

"Yes," muttered the Indian, "the *pale faces* are prattling women ! They have two words for each thing, while a red-skin will make the sound of his voice speak for him " — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

The brave Tecumseh's words are good :

"One league for terror, strife, and blood,

Must all our far-spread tribes unite ;

Then shall the *pale-face* sink to night." — *Colton, Tecumseh*, xviii.

**PALMATEER.** See *Parmateer*.

**PALM-CABBAGE.** The young terminal bud or sprouting leaf of the *Areca oleracea* and of some other palms, used as a culinary vegetable when sufficiently tender.

**PALMETTO.** (*Chamerops palmetto*.) A perennial plant strongly marking climate. It commences in the same regions with Long Moss, that is to say, about 33°. It throws up from a large root, so tough as to be cut with difficulty by an axe, and hard to be eradicated from the soil, large, fan-shaped palms, of the most striking and vivid verdure, and ribbed with wonderful exactness. It is used by the savages and the poorer creoles as thatch for their cabins ; and from the tender shoots of the season, properly prepared, a very useful kind of summer hats, called *palmetto hats*, is manufactured. — *Flint, Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

**PALMETTO CAPITAL.** The city of Augusta, the capital of South Carolina, so called from the arms of the State, which contain a palmetto.

In the delightful temperature of to-day, with the rich foliage of the trees in green luxuriance, and the perfumes of a thousand beds of flowers burdening the air, the *Palmetto capital* is exceedingly pleasant. — *Letter from Charleston, N. Y. Tribune.*

**PALMETTO STATE.** The State of South Carolina.

**PANEL-HOUSE, or PANEL-DEN.** A house of prostitution and theft combined.

**PANEL-THIEF.** A thief who, while the victim is engaged with a girl of the town, enters the room by a secret opening, and abstracts his money, watch, etc.

**PANDOWDY.** Food made of bread and apples baked together. — *Worcester.* New England. Halliwell gives *Pandoulde* as the Somerset name for a custard. See *Slump*.

**PANTALONERY.** The particular description of fabrics from which pantaloons are made. A word used by the merchant tailors in their advertisements.

**PANTS.** Pantaloons. A word borrowed from the language of tailors' bills.

The things named *pants* in certain documents,  
A word not made for gentlemen, but gents.

*Holmes' Poems*, p. 217.

**PAPPOOSE.** (Abenaki Ind.) Among the native Indians of New England, a babe or young child. — *Roger Williams.* It is applied by the whites to Indian infants in general.

Where the Indian squaw hung her young *pappoos* upon the bough, and left it to squall at the hush-a-by of the blast, the Anglo-Saxon mother now rocks the cradle of her delicate babe — *Dow's Sermons.*

**PAPPOOSE-ROOT.** (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*.) A plant called also Blue Cohosh.

**PARISH.** In Louisiana a *parish* is what, in other States, is called a county.

**TO PARMATEER, or PALMATEER.** To electioneer; evidently a corruption of *parliamenteer*, to electioneer for a seat in parliament. This term is very common in the State of Rhode Island, beyond which I think it does not extend.

Our people talk a great deal about emancipation; but they know it's all bunkum, and it serves to *palmateer* on, and makes a pretty catchword. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, 175.

**PARTLY.** Mr. Pickering notices the use of this word in the sense of *nearly*, *almost*, in some towns of the Middle States. Ex. "His house is

*partly* opposite to mine," i. e. nearly opposite. "It is *partly* all gone," i. e. nearly all gone.

PARTRIDGE. In the South and West, the quail is so called.

PARTRIDGE-BERRY. A name applied both to *Gaultheria procumbens*, or Creeping Wintergreen, and to *Mitchella repens*. The scarlet fruit of both is similar in appearance, highly flavored in the former, but tasteless in the latter.

PASSAGE. Enactment; the act of carrying through all the regular forms necessary to give validity; as the *passage* of a law, or of a bill into a law, by a legislative body. — *Webster*. Mr. Pickering says this word "is criticized by the English reviewers as an American innovation." It is not in the English dictionaries in this sense.

His agency in procuring the *passage* of the stamp act was more than suspected. — *Hosack*.

PASSION-FLOWER. (*Passiflora*.) A genus of tendril-bearing vines, most of whose species are South American. The early missionaries fancied that they found in these flowers emblems of the implements of Christ's passion: the fringe representing the crown of thorns; the large anthers fixed by their middle, hammers; and the five styles, the nails. We have two wild species, *lutea* and *incarnata*, common in the South and West. — *Gray*.

PATENTABLE. That may be patented; for which a patent can be taken out.

PATENT RIGHT. A patent. In the United States an inventor takes out a "*patent right*;" in England, "letters patent."

PATENT AGENT. One who procures patents for inventors.

PATENT SAFE GAME or OPERATION. A system of trickery practised in our large cities on verdant gentlemen from the country. Three confidants generally play the game; but two can do it. When they see a person called by them a "Sucker," who appears to be a fit subject to play upon, they learn his name and something about him, such as the place where he came from, etc. One of them, who is called the "Roper," goes up to him, names him familiarly, and shakes him by the hand. This at first rather astonishes the stranger; but the Roper looks so innocent, and is so obliging and kind that he soon disarms his suspicion and gains his confidence. He then invites him to go and see the wonderful places about the city, and walks about until he arrives at a proper place, where Mr. Roper, by looking down on the ground, discovers, accidentally of course, a little

neatly turned wooden ball, which he picks up, and gazing upon it with a look of intense curiosity, he says meditatively to his dupe, "Well, this is really a queer thing; I wonder what it can be used for;" and, pressing it all round, to his apparent surprise, out he pushes an interior plug. With well assumed wonder he says, "Ah, what is this?" and pulls it out entirely, unscrewing its lid. "A nice little box; well now this is ingenious; and it has something in it too." He then takes out a piece of white paper, shows Sucker the empty box, and throws the piece of paper on the ground. There is another piece of paper in the small chamber at the other end of the plug; but Sucker does not see this, and the plug is put back in its place.

A man is now noticed coming towards them, attentively examining the ground, with despair depicted on his countenance. He attracts the Roper's attention, who says to his dupe companion, "This man has lost something valuable; let us put some questions to him."

"You appear to be troubled in mind, sir; have you lost any thing?" "Yes, sir, I have lost something that I would not have parted with for ten thousand dollars. I had spent years in inventing a new safe for fires, which I know would save millions' worth of property, and was on my way to Messrs. Holmes & Butler's, the safe makers, to get one made; but alas! I have lost the model! It had the appearance of a small carved wooden ball;—oh, sir! what shall I do?" Roper says, feelingly and honest-like aside to Sucker, "I can stand this no longer; it pains me to see him." "Friend," says he to the afflicted safe loser, "I think I know where it is;" and, taking it out of his pocket, asks, "Is this your model safe?" "It is, it is; thank you, thank you!" exclaims the overjoyed safe man. "But how," says Roper, "can such a thing as that answer for a safe?" "Oh, I put a prop under it; and when a fire takes place, the support has but to be knocked away, and out it rolls down an incline into the street." "By all the powers," says Roper, "that is a capital idea! I suppose you have made it to hold something." "Oh, yes, there is a box inside of it, and a paper in its chamber now."

"I don't believe that," says Roper. (And aside to Sucker he whispers, "I'll bet him on that piece of paper.") "I'll bet there is no paper in it."

"How much will you bet? I'll put up \$1,000."

"I have not that much,"—(aside to Sucker, "I'll take \$100 from him,")—"but I'll bet \$100;" and he takes out a number of bills, perhaps \$50, and a bank check for other \$50, and says to Sucker (for he has found out how much *he* has), "Will you loan me bills for this check until we get to my hotel?"

All this has been done so honest and fair like that Sucker pulls out his

pocket-book, gives accomplished Roper \$50 in bills, and takes his check. Then the safe man presses on the conical end of the plug, takes it out, and from the other end pulls out the other piece of paper. The thing is done; and the safe man, having fairly won the bet, marches off with the money. The Roper looks sad and crest-fallen, but is soon relieved of his grief, for up comes a person assuming to be a policeman, charges them with gambling, and makes a grab at them. Roper shouts, "Run!" to his companion, and takes to his heels; but poor Sucker is held by the officer, and, denying the imputation of gambling, solicits to be let go. This the policeman allows; when, in his fright, Sucker flies the city, and soon finds out that his check is worthless, that the safe man, policeman, and Roper were colleagues, and he the dupe of the *patent safe game*. — *Scientific American*, Vol. X. p. 381.

Was Gen. Scott, by a sort of *patent safe* or Peter Funk operation, diddled out of his ten thousand, or did Santa Anna try the trick merely to get a little ready money for the uses of the defensive garrisons of Mexico, or how was it? — *N. Y. Herald*, Sept. 1, 1857.

**PATENT SAFE OPERATOR.** A rogue who plays the "patent safe game."

Little Toddlkins arrives about this hour, escorted by his female guard of honor, with a wonderful hat, all feathers and ribbons, and his little legs cased in stockings of the most brilliant hues. The guard of honor takes possession of a bench not too far from a flashy looking man with a black moustache, who is probably a *patent safe operator*, and with whom she presently falls into conversation. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 3, 1858

**PATROON.** (Dutch, *patroon*, a patron.) A grantee of land to be settled under the old Dutch governments of New York and New Jersey.

The following articles, from the "Freedoms and Exemptions" granted to the Dutch West India Company, will show what were some of the privileges of the *Patroons*:

Art. 3. All such shall be acknowledged *Patroons* of New Netherland who shall, within the space of four years next after they have given notice to any of the Chambers of the Company here, or to the Commander of the Council there, undertake to plant a colonie there of fifty souls, upwards of fifteen years of age; one fourth part within one year, and within three years of the sending of the first, the remainder, to the full number of fifty persons, to be shipped from hence, on pain, in case of wilful neglect, of being deprived of the privileges obtained, etc.

Art. 5. The *Patroons*, by virtue of their power, shall and may be permitted, at such places as they shall settle their colonies, to extend their limits four miles along the shore, that is, on one side of a navigable river, or two miles on each side of a river, and so far into the country as the situation of the occupiers will permit, etc.

Art. 8. The *Patroons* may, if they think proper, make use of all lands, rivers, and woods lying contiguous to them, for and during so long a time as this company shall grant them to other *Patroons* or particulars.

For a further account of the privileges of the *Patroons*, see O'Callahan's History of New Netherland, Vol. I. p. 112.

**PATROONSHIP.** The office of a patroon.

The great Oloffe indulged in magnificent dreams of foreign conquests and great *patroonships* in the wilderness. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**PAPAW.** (*Asimina triloba*.) A wild, fruit-bearing shrub, remarkable for its beauty. The fruit is nutritious, and a great resource to the Indians. "The popular name of Papaw," says Gray, in his *N. Amer. Genera*, "was doubtless given to the fruit from a fancied resemblance in the appearance or taste of the fruit to the true Papaw of tropical America." The plant is also noted for the pliability and toughness of its twigs, well known as substitutes for parts of broken harness.

**PAUHAGEN, or POHAGEN.** See *Menhaden*.

**PEAGE, or PEAK.** Shells, or strings of shells, formerly used by the Indians of New England and Virginia, as well as among the early settlers, as money; also called *wampum* and *seawan*, which see.

No one shall take any black *peage* of the Indians but at foure a penny; and if any shall take black *peage* under four a penny, hee shall forfeitt sayd *peage*, one halfe to the informer, and the other halfe to the State. — *Laws of Rhode Island*, 1648

The Indians [of Virginia] had nothing which they reckoned riches before the English went among them, except *peak*, roenoke, and such trifles, made out of the conk shell. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705.

The current money of all the Indians in Carolina, and, I believe, of all over the continent as far as the Bay of Mexico, is that which we call *peak* and ronoak. This is that which they in New York call *wampum*. — *Lawson's Carolina*, 1718.

On the Virginia coast is found that species of conch shell which the Indian *peak* is made of. The extremities of these shells are blue and the rest white, so that *peak* of both these colors are drilled out of the same shell, serving the natives both for ornament and money, and are esteemed by them beyond gold and silver. — *West over Papers*, p. 12.

**TO PEAK, or PEKE.** To peep. It is quite common in the popular language of New England to hear this word, which Dr. Webster supposes to be the same as *peep*. If it be a corruption, which is doubtful, the examples will show that its use is not modern.

Now whereof he speketh,  
He cryeth and he creketh,  
He pryeth and he *peketh*. — *Skelton, Colin Cloute*, Vol. I. 312.

That other pries and *pekes* in everie place. — *Gascoigne*, p. 301.

He's a lazy, good-for-nothin' fellow. He's no better than a *peaking* mudsucker. — *Margaret*, p. 20.

The convent committee visited the city of Worcester, and inspected the Catholic Seminary. The members of it behaved in such an undignified, ludicrous, *peeking*, bombastical manner, that they obtained the appellation of the "smelling committee." — *Worcester Transcript*, April, 1855.

As once my dazzled eyes I set  
Where Julia's neck and boddice met,  
She asked what I was seeking.

"There — that," said I; "is that Nankeen?"

The lining of your waist, I mean."

"No, sir!" said she, "that's *Pekin*!"

*Tribune Almanac*, 1855.

**PEAKED.** Thin and emaciated, as from sickness. Holloway says, that in England they say of a sickly person, "he looks pale and *peaked*." The same expression is often heard in the Northern States.

But there was a lawyer a standing up by the grove, lookin' as *peaked* and as forlorn as an unmated coon. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 11.

**PEAKY, or PEEKY.** Sickly looking; peakish.

The species of decay to which the cypress tree is liable, shows itself in detached spots in close proximity to each other. Timber affected in this way is denominated by raftsmen, *peeky*. — *Dickeson on Cypress Timber*.

**PEALER.** A dashing, go ahead person or thing; a rouser.

**PEANUT.** The common name for the fruit of the *Arachnis hypogæa*. It is also called Ground-nut and Earth-nut, from its growing under ground.

**PECAN-NUT.** (*Carya olivæformis*.) A tree of beautiful form and appearance, useful for building and for making rails. Its nut is long, cylindrical, and olive-shaped, with a shell comparatively soft. The meat lies in two oblong lobes, is easily taken out entire, and excels all other nuts in delicacy of flavor. — *Flint, Geogr. of Mississ. Valley*.

**PECCARY.** (*Dicotyles*.) The native American hog, common in South America, but found also in Central America, and as far North as New Mexico and Texas. In its habits it is closely allied to the common hog; its gait is the same, it roots up the earth in a similar manner, and expresses its feelings by the same disagreeable grunt. It differs from it mainly in having under the skin on the middle of the loins a gland which secretes a fluid of a very offensive smell.

**PECKERWOOD.** Western for Woodpecker.

**PECULIAR INSTITUTION.** Negro slavery, so called as being peculiar to the Southern States.

The dangers which at present threaten the *peculiar* domestic institutions of the South, make it necessary that all strangers from the North should be examined and their business ascertained. — *South Carolina Gazette*.

Urgent appeals were sent to the sympathizers of Senator Douglas in Missouri to attend and do honor to the champion of the *peculiar institution* at the meeting in Quincy, Illinois. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1854.

**TO PEEL IT.** To run at full speed. "Come, boys; *peel it* now, or you'll be late."



**PEERT, or PEART.** Brisk, lively. An old word, still provincial in England, and probably a corrupt pronunciation of *pert*. The phrase, "as *peert* as a lizard," is sometimes heard. It is used in a good as well as a bad sense, and especially of one who is recovering, or "looking up," after a fit of sickness. In Virginia they say the wind blows quite *peert*, i. e. briskly.

Give your play-gull a stoole, and my lady her foole,  
And her usher potatoes and marrow;  
But your poet, were he dead, set a pot on his head,  
And he rises as *peart* as a sparrow. — *Bibl. Brit.* II. 167.

I gave her the best bend I had in me, and raised my bran-new hat as *peert* and perlite as a minister — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

That fellow must think we were all raised in a saw-mill, he looks so *peert* whenever he comes in. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*.

Mary's rite *piert*, and her child is making a monstrous good beginnin' in the world. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 200.

Well, I starts off pretty considerable *peert* and brisk, considering I was weak. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 178.

Knocking round the place, I came upon one of these fellers that grinds music out'n a mahogany box. He had a little monkey along — the *peartest*, least bit of a critter you ever seed. — *Widow Bagby's Husband*.

**PEET-WEET.** (*Tringoides macularius*.) The spotted Sandpiper or Sandlark of ornithologists, but better known among the people by the name of *Peet-weet*, in allusion to its note; or of Teeter and Tilt-up or Tip-up, from its often repeated grotesque jerking motions.

**PEE-WEE.** The name given by boys to a little marble.

In Forbes's *Dahomey*, Vol. I. p. 219, is the following passage in his account of the Dahoman language:

The addition of *pee-wee*, or small, is sufficient to express an almost entirely different meaning in our idiom; thus, *toh*, a city; *toh pee-wee*, a village; *hoh*, a house; *hoh pee-wee*, a hut.

**PELT.** A blow. — *Grose*. Used only in familiar language, and chiefly by boys.

**PEMMICAN.** A far-famed provender of man, in the wilds of North America, formed by pounding the choice parts of the meat very small, dried over a slow fire or in the frost, and put into bags made of the skin of the slain animal, into which a portion of melted fat is then poured. The whole being then strongly pressed and sewed up, constitutes the best and most portable food for the "voyageurs," and one which, with proper care, will keep a long time. Fifty pounds of meat and forty pounds of grease make a bag of *pemmican*. *Sweet pemmican* is another kind, made chiefly of bones. — *Dunn's Oregon*, p. 59.

While we were discussing our usual dinner of hard dried meat and *pemmican*, a hunter burst into the room with the glad tidings that he had killed a moose. — *Back, Arctic Journal*.

If *pemmican* be the order of the day, the lean meat, after being dried, is pounded into dust, and, being put into a bag, is enriched with nearly an equal weight of fat. — *Sir G. Simpson's Journey*, Vol. I p. 92.

**PENNYROYAL.** This very English name is given in this country to a different plant, although the color and taste of both are nearly alike. The true English *pennyroyal* is a mint; the American is *Hedeoma pulegioides*.

**PEON.** (Span.) A day laborer. These laborers are very often bondmen for debt; which, as Gregg describes, is thus brought about. "They labor for fixed wages, it is true; but all they can earn is hardly sufficient to keep them in the coarsest clothing and pay their contingent expenses. Men's wages range from two to five dollars a month, and those of women from fifty cents to two dollars; in payment of which they rarely receive any money, but instead thereof articles of apparel and other necessities at the most exorbitant prices. The consequence is that the servant soon accumulates a debt which he is unable to pay,—his wages being often engaged a year or two in advance. Now, according to the usages, if not the laws of the country, he is bound to serve his master until all arrearages are liquidated; and is only enabled to effect an exchange of masters by engaging another to pay his debt, to whom he becomes in like manner bound.

"If I was going far into Mexico," said the guide, "I would always hire a Mexican fellow to go with me, so I could dress mean and make him do all the business, so I would be thought to be his *peon*." — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 336.

The whole town was in an uproar, and no one seemed to know what it was about. At length it was ascertained that one of the herders was a *peon*, and a man wished to seize and imprison him till he could be restored to his original state of servitude. — *Capt. Whipple's Explorations to the Pacific*, p. 62.

**PEONAGE.** The system of treatment pursued towards the laboring classes in Mexico.

**PEPPERIDGE.** (*Nyssa multiflora*.) A name given in the South and West to the Black or Sour Gum, also called Tupebo. It has a very tough wood, which is difficult to split.

**PERIAUGER.** (Span. *piragua*.) 1. A canoe formed of one large tree.

Getting into a *perioque* I paddled off to a part of the Green River where there was sand and clay. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 269.

At night the barges [of the British] were heard rowing up and down the river on mysterious errands; *perriangers* also paid them furtive visits occasionally. — *Irving's Washington*, Vol. II. p. 272.

Our skipper rowed to an oyster-bank just by, and loaded his *periauga* with oysters. — *Westover Papers*, p. 13.

This word is frequently corrupted to *pettyauger*.

On the 8th the French crossed the Missouri in a *pettyauger*, the Indians on floats of cane, and the horses were swam over. — *Du Pratz, Louisiana*, Vol. I. p. 108.

2. A small schooner without a bowsprit, and with a lee-board, formerly much used in the waters of New York and New Jersey.

Steamboats, lighters, *periaugers*, scows, clam-boats, and nondescript water-witches of every sort, have arrived hourly from quarantine, loaded with almost entire villages of men, women, and children [German and Irish emigrants]. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

**PERK.** Lively; brisk; holding up the head. — *Webster*. This old word, still provincial in England, is used in the interior of New England, and is commonly pronounced *perk* (the *ea* as in *pear*.) — *Pickering*.

**PERSIMMON.** (Virginia Indian. *Diospyros virginiana*.) This tree is unknown in the northeastern parts of our country; but south of latitude 42° it is found throughout the United States. It varies exceedingly in size, being sometimes sixty feet in height, with a trunk twenty inches in diameter, but more frequently does not attain half these dimensions. The fruit is about an inch in diameter, and is powerfully astringent when green; but when fully ripe, the pulp becomes soft, palatable, and very sweet. The wood is very hard, and is used for large screws, mallets, shoe-lasts, wedges, etc. In clearing the forests, the *persimmon* is usually preserved; and it is probable that the quality of the fruit might be improved by cultivation. — *Encyc. Amer.*

"The longest pole knocks down the *persimmons*," is a proverbial saying, meaning that the strongest party gains the day.

Plums there are of three sorts. The red and white are like our hedge plums; but the other, which they call *Putchamins*, grow as high as a Palmota, the fruit is like a Medler, it is first green, then yellow, and red when it is ripe. If it be not ripe, it will draw a man's mouth awry, with much torment; but when it is ripe, it is delicious as an apricot. — *Smith's Virginia*, Book II.

My worthy friends, to make sure of happiness, you must be honest, kind to one another, and cling to the belief in a better world to come like a "possum to a *persimmon* tree." — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 292.

**PERSIMMON BEER.** A kind of domestic beer whose principal ingredient is persimmons.

**PERT END UP.** Better; more cheerful. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**PESKILY.** Confoundedly; very; extremely. I know not the origin of this New England word.

Skeered, says he, sarves him right; he might have known how to feel for other folks, and not funkify them so *peskily*. — *Sam Slick in England*.

I'm *peskily* sorry about that mare. — *Ibid.* ch. 28.

The post-office accounts were the next bother ; and they puzzled all on us *peskily*. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 139.

**PESKY.** 1. Plaguy, confounded.

I found it [looking for houses] a *pesky* sight worse job than I expected. — *Downing, May-Day in New York*, p. 36.

Orphy should have been at home long ago, if that *pesky* wheel hadn't come off his wagon. — *Fanny Fern*.

A couple of Yankee girls put a bullfioq in the hired man's bed, to see if they couldn't get him to talk Daniel threw the fioq out of the window, and never said a word Soon after he put a half a bushel of chestnut burrs in the girls' bed ; and about the time he thought they would make the least shadow, Daniel went to the door and rattled the latch furiously. Out went the candle, and in went the girls ; but they didn't stick, though the burrs did. Calling on them, he begged them to be quiet, for he only wanted to know if they had "seen any thing of that *pesky* bullfioq. He'd a gin five dollaas to find it. — *Newspaper*.

2. Confoundedly, excessively.

Don't be so *pesky* starch. I'll be dod fetched if I meant any harm. I only spoke of the calf, and you went a streak higher and talked of the garter. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 195.

I wonder how he's on't for face-cards ; ha ! ha ! So *pesky* slow, we shan't get through to-night. — *Murgat*, p. 305.

The thing of it is, people has got to be so *pesky* proud and polite. — *Ibid.* p. 141.

**PETER FUNK.** At the petty auctions a person is employed to bid on articles put up for sale, in order to raise their price. Such a person is called a *Peter Funk* ; probably from such a fictitious name having frequently been given when articles were bought in. At the "mock auctions," as they are called in New York, this practice of having by-bidders is carried to a great extent ; and strangers, unacquainted with their tricks, are often cheated by them. Grose describes a person similarly employed in England, under the name of "puffer."

The *Peter Funk* of New York is a small-souled pickpocket ; he does not exactly cut through your coat or pants, but under specious pretences he induces you to hand over your purse to him, thus virtually making a cat's paw of your own fist ; he steals your cash, but does it under a flimsy show of business ; he inveigles you into an offer, and then either sells you one article and delivers you another which is inferior, or multiplies the price you have offered and the quantity you engaged to take — *Tricks and Traps of New York City*.

**TO PETTIFOG.** Some newspaper writers use this verb transitively, in the sense of to advocate in the manner of a pettifogger ; as, "He *pettifogs* his client's cause."

**PEWIT, or PEWEE.** See *Phæbe Bird*.

**PHEESE.** A fit of fretfulness. A colloquial, vulgar word in the United

States. — *Worcester*. The adjective *pheesy*, fretful, querulous, irritable, sore, is provincial in England. — *Forby*. Also written *feeze*, which see.

PHILLIPENA. See *Fillipeen*.

PHŒBE-BIRD. (*Sayornis fuscus*.) The Pewit, or Pewee, so called from a fanciful resemblance in the name to the sound made by this bird.

Another of the feathered visitors who follow close upon the steps of winter, is the Pewit, Peewee, or *Phæbe-Bird*. — *Irving*, *Wolfert's Roost*, p. 31.

PICACHO. (Span.) A prominent peak or elevation rising abruptly above a mountain or chain of mountains. They are common land-marks in New Mexico and Arizona.

Almost due north of the Sierra Verde lies the *picacho* of the Sierra del Babuquibari, one of the orographical phenomena of the country, its peculiarity being such as to attract especially the attention of the red men — *Schott's Geological Obs. Mexican Boundary*, p. 70.

PICAYUNE. The name for the Spanish half real in Florida, Louisiana, etc. See *Federal Currency*.

PICAYUNE, or PICAYUNISH. Sixpenny; and hence small, mean.

There is nothing *picayune* about the members of St. George's [Cricket] Club; for the love of sport, they will almost invariably enter upon matches that other clubs would not accept. — *N. Y. Herald*.

"Wall, mister," he said, "It's your business, not mine; but I know something of that boat. She belongs to that darn *picayunish* old coon, Jim Mason, and he'll run her till she sinks or busts up, and then God help the crowd." — *Notes on Canada, etc., Blackwood's Mag.*

PICK. In mercantile usage, and among manufacturers, a *pick* is a thread. The relative quality of cotton cloth is denoted by the number of *picks* it has to the inch.

TO PICK. In the South, to *pick* the banjo or guitar, means to play upon these instruments. Comp. the French *pincer*.

PICKANINNY. (Span. *pequeño niño*, little child.) A negro or mulatto infant. Used in the Southern States.

I jest sauntered in as he was puttin' up the *pickaninny* yaller gal, about five years old. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

You can't be too warm, nor too guarded your head,  
To 'scape the mosquito's whim;  
And a nice *pickaninny* that's been well fed  
Is a capital meal for him. — *Ethiopian Melodies*.

PICKEREL WEED. (*Pontideria cordata*). An aquatic plant bearing a spike of blue flowers common on the roadsides and in ditches in the Middle States.

PICKINGS AND STEALINGS. The perquisites of office.

PICK-UP. A *pick-up dinner*, called also simply a *pick-up*, is a dinner made up of such fragments of cold meats as remain from former meals. The word is common in the Northern States.

The Queen regretted that she could not invite me to stay to dinner, cause 't was washin' day in the palace, and they only had a *pick-up* dinner — *Maj. Downing in London.*

PIECE. 1. A little while; as, "Stay a *piece*," i. e. wait a bit. Provincial in the north of England. — *Johnson.*

2. A piece of bread and butter; a snack. "Have you had your 11 o'clock *piece*?"

TO PIECE. To eat pieces of bread and butter, to eat between meals. "He has n't eaten much dinner, because he's been a *piecin'* on't all the mornin'." Pennsylvania.

PIG-FISH. See *Sea-Robin.*

PIG-NUT. (*Juglans porcina.*) A small species of hickory nut.

PIG-PLUM. See *Hog-Plum.*

PIG'S WHISTLE. "I'll do so in less than a *pig's whistle*," that is "in less than no time."

PIG-YOKE. Among seamen, the name for a quadrant, from its resemblance to a pig-yoke.

PIGEON-ROOST. The social and gregarious habits of pigeons, incline them to roost together, and their places of resort are called "*pigeon-roosts.*" In these places they settle on all the trees for a considerable distance round in such numbers as to break off the branches. — *Flint's Mississippi Valley.*

The *pigeon-roost* in Decatur county, Indiana, extends over a distance of twenty-eight miles; it is about fourteen miles wide. The birds have not nested at this roost for thirty years until this spring. Over this vast extent of country every tree has from ten to fifteen nests, and every nest at least one bird. The young are now hardly able to fly, and the shooting is mere slaughter. The old birds leave early in the morning in search of food, and return in the evening. — (*Wash.*) *States, May 15th, 1858.*

PIGEON WOODPECKER. See *Clape.*

PILE. 1. (Dutch, *pyl.*) An arrow. This word is still retained by the boys of New York.

2. A term first used at the gaming-table, and next by our California adventurers, signifying a quantity of money. Hence, "to make one's *pile*,"

is to make one's fortune. The term seems to be the revival of an old one used by Dr. Franklin in his "Poor Richard's Almanac" for April, 1741, where he says :

Rash mortals, ere you take a wife,  
Contrive your *pile* to last for life.

Alanthus Bug was planted in the world as a pedlar of peanuts ; then gradually grew into a grocery man ; then budded into a broker ; and next into the full blossom of a banker ; and now, by the closest economy, he has amassed a million, and can point to his *pile* with proud satisfaction, and say, "Alone, I did it!"—*Cairo City Times*.

Since writing to you last, I have returned from Fraser River to San Francisco, having been gone about four months. During this time, with my own hands I dug \$25 worth of gold dust, and my expenses were about \$300 ; however, I have clung to the "*pile*," and intend to keep it as a memorial of my trip.—*Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 25, 1858.

PILLOW-BIER and PILLOW-SLIP are used in New England to signify a pillow-case.

PIMENTO. See *Allspice*.

PIMPING. Little ; petty ; as, "a *pimping* thing."—*Skinner*. Used in the interior of New England.

Was I little ? asked Margaret. Yes, and *pimpin'* enough. And I fed your marm with rue and comfrey-root, or ye never'd come to this.—*Margaret*, p. 19.

PIMPLO, i. e. PIN-PILLOW. The name given in Barbadoes to the Prickly Pear.

PINCH. To be *in a pinch*, is to be in a tight place ; to be hard up for money. Western.

PINE-BARENS. A term applied to level, sandy tracts, covered with pine-trees, in the Southern States.—*Worcester*.

The road which I had to travel lay through a dreary and extensive forest of pine-trees, or, as it is termed by the Carolinians, a *pine-barren*, where a habitation is seldom seen, except at intervals of ten or twelve miles.—*Lambert's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 226.

PINE NUT. The edible nut contained in the cones of pine. See *Pinion*.

PINE-TREE STATE. The State of Maine.

PINEY WOODS. The name given at the South to a large tract covered with pines, especially in the low country.

PINERY. In the Western States, a place where pine-trees grow, or a forest of pines. A Wisconsin paper, in speaking of emigration, says :

We have noticed squads of hardy Suckers from Illinois, with their baggage slung upon their backs, making their way due north for the *pineries*.

Ever since the first settlement of the West, many have followed the business of running rafts from the *pinerias* down the Mississippi. — *Sketches of the West*.

**PINION.** (Span., *piñon*.) A species of pine-tree, growing on the head waters of the Arkansas; common to that region as well as to New Mexico, the Rocky Mountains, etc. Wild turkeys frequent groves of these trees for the sake of their nuts, which are sweet and palatable. Bears and other animals also feed on them. The Indians, too, make much of them.

Upon each side of the Zuñi river are extensive forests of small cedars and *piñons*. — *Capt. Whipple's Explorations to the Pacific*, p. 72.

**PINKY.** (Dutch, *pink*.) The little finger. A very common term in New York, especially among small children, who, when making a bargain with each other, are accustomed to confirm it by interlocking the little finger of each other's right hands, and repeating the following doggerel:

*Pinky, pinky, bow-bell,  
Whoever tells a lie  
Will sink down to the bad place,  
And never rise up again.*

**PINK ROOT.** (*Spigelia marilandica*.) A well-known vermifuge, the plant being remarkable for its beautiful flowers. It is also known as the Carolina Pink.

**PINK-STERN.** (French, *pinque*.) A vessel with a narrow stern; hence all vessels so formed are called *pink-sterned*. — *Chambers*. This species of craft is very common in the waters of New England. See *Chebacco Boat*.

**PINNATED GROUSE.** See *Prairie Hen*.

**PINOLE.** (Span.) Parched corn, ground and mixed with sugar and spices. This, mixed with water, is a palatable food, and is much used in Texas and by parties crossing the plains.

**PINXTER.** (Dutch, *pinkster*.) Whitsunday. On *Pinxter* Monday the Dutch negroes of New York, New Jersey, and elsewhere, consider themselves especially privileged to get as drunk as they can.

*Pinkster* fields and *pinkster* frolics are no novelties to us, sir, as they occur at every season; and I am just old enough not to have missed one of them all for the last twelve years. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 90.

**PINXTER BLUMACHIES**, i. e. Whitsuntide flowers. (Dutch.) A familiar name in the State of New York for the Swamp Honeysuckle and other early flowers.

**TO PIPE.** To follow; to waylay.



It is the business of all policemen to make themselves familiar with the haunts of burglars, thieves, and gamblers, to *pipe* or follow them, and be ready at any moment to nab them in the act of crime.—*N. Y. Tribune*.

**PIPE-LAYING.** This term, in political parlance, means any arrangement by which a party makes sure of a certain addition to its legitimate strength in the hour of trial—that is, the election. In other words, to *lay pipe* means to bring up voters not legally qualified.

It were too long a story to tell the origin of the term at length. In brief, it arose from an accusation brought against the Whig party of this city (New York) some years ago, of a gigantic scheme to bring on voters from Philadelphia. The accusation was made by a notorious Democrat, of not very pure political character, who professed to have derived his information from the agent employed by the Whigs for the service. This agent had actually been employed by certain leaders of the Whig party, but on a service deemed legitimate and proper in the art of electioneering. He, however, turned traitor, and, as was alleged by the Whigs, concocted a plot with the notorious Democrat to throw odium upon the Whigs. A mass of correspondence was brought forward in proof, consisting mainly of letters written by the agent to various parties in New York, apparently describing the progress and success of his operations. In these letters, as if for the purpose of concealment, the form of a mere business correspondence was adopted—the number of men hired to visit New York and vote being spoken of as so many yards of pipe—the work of laying down pipe for the Croton water being at that time in full activity.

The Whig leaders were indicted on the strength of these pseudo revelations, and the letters were read in court; but the jury believed neither in them nor in the writer of them, and the accused were acquitted.

The term "*pipe-laying*," however, was at once adopted as a synonym for negotiations to procure fraudulent votes.—[*J. Inman*.]

The result of the Pennsylvania election would not be in the least doubtful, if we could be assured of fair play and no *pipe-laying*—*N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 30, 1848.

There is a magnificent scheme of *pipe-laying* and log-rolling going on in Pennsylvania.—*N. Y. Herald*, Sept. 1856.

**PIPSISSEWA.** (*Chimaphila umbellata*.) A popular domestic remedy, much used by the Indians and now of the U. S. Pharmacopœia. Also called Prince's Pride and Wintergreen.

**PIROGUE.** See *Periauger*.

**PISTAREEN.** The Spanish *peseta Sevillana*, or one fifth of a dollar. A silver coin, formerly common in the United States, of the value of twenty cents. They have now gone entirely out of use.

**PIT.** (Dutch, *pit*, a kernel.) The stone of a fruit, as of a cherry or peach. Mostly confined to New York State.

You put an apple-seed or a peach-*pit* into the ground, and it springs up into the form of a miniature tree. — *Prof. Bush on the Resurrection.*

**PITA**, pron. *peeta*. The name given to the fine fibres produced by the agaves and kindred plants, used for sewing and other delicate purposes. The name is also applied to the plants which furnish the fibre.

**PITAHAYA.** (*Cereus giganteus*.) A gigantic cactus found in New Mexico, and which appears in the greatest perfection in the sterile deserts bordering on the river Gila, where it reaches the height of fifty and sixty feet. It bears a delicious fruit resembling the fig in taste, whence it is sometimes called the Indian Fig.

**PITPAN.** In the West Indies and Central America, a very long, narrow, flat-bottomed, trough-like canoe, with thin and flat projecting edges.

**PITY.** To think a *pity* of a person, is to take pity on him. *It is a pity* of one, means he is to be pitied.

**PIZARRO.** A corruption of *piazza*. New England.

**To PLACE.** To *place* a person, is to remember the place where he belongs or was born.

**PLACER.** (Span.) A locality where gold is found to exist in the "dust" or scaly form. The Hispano-Americans apply the term to deposits of sand formed by the action of water, the currents of rivers, etc., or what geologists would call diluvium or drift. Our people use the word to signify a rich mine of minerals or of any thing else that is valuable.

The Homer of Chapman is so precious a gift, that we are ready to forgive Mr. Smith's [the publisher's] shortcomings, in consideration of it. It is a vast *placer*, full of nuggets for the philologist and lover of poetry — *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1858.

The Washington Market question, involving a contest between the State and the city, furnishes a perfect *placer* in the shape of fees for some of our leading lawyers. — *N. Y. Herald*, May 18, 1858.

**PLAGUY.** Horribly, awfully, exceedingly. And so in England.

The circumstances of the case should make the committee less "avidus gloriæ," for all praise of them would look *plaguy* suspicious. — *Lord Byron to Lord Holland*, Let. 107.

The Prince de Joinville is a *plaguy* handsome man, and as full of fun as a kitten. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 22.

**PLAGUY SIGHT.** This is a very common expression in the colloquial language of New England, and means, a great deal.

"Squire," said Slick, "I'd a *plaguy sight* sooner see Ascot than any thing else in England." — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 19.

**PLANE-TREE.** Another name for the Sycamore or Button-wood tree. See *Button-wood*.

**PLANING-MACHINE.** A machine operated by steam or water-power for smoothing boards.

**PLANK.** A platform in a political sense is a constitution; and as platforms are literally composed of planks, so, in the same figurative sense, planks are the several political principles which appertain to a party. See *Platform*, No. 2.

The Free Soil party regard every *plank* and splinter of the Buffalo platform as a relic of untold value. — *Providence Journal*.

**TO PLANK.** To lay, to put; generally applied to money; as, "He *planked down* (or *planked up*) the cash."

I've had to *plank down* handsome, and do the thing genteel; but Mr. Landlord found he had no fool to deal with, neither. — *Sam Slick in England*.

Why, says he, shell out, and *plank down* a pile of dollars. — *Ibid*.

During the last war he *planked up* more gold and silver to lend the government than Benton ever counted. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 59.

Come, *plank up* the tin. I'll show you that Jim Borland ain't a goin' to be backed out by mere bragging. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 163.

**PLANKED SHAD.** A shad nailed to a plank and roasted.

Did you ever eat a *planked shad*? Then you have something yet to live for—your dish of enjoyment is not yet full, until you have a shad caught fresh from the water, cleaned and crucified to an oak plank, which is held to the fire, and seasoned properly with salt, pepper, and butter, and served up hot. It is, of all fish dishes, the daintiest, richest, and most satisfactory in an appetitical point of view. — *Balt. Sun*, April 30, 1855.

**PLANK ROAD.** A road made with a flooring of planks laid across the track, a substitute for turnpikes, where timber is cheap.

**PLANTAIN.** (Span. *platano*.) The fruit of the *Musa paradisiaca*, imported from the West Indies.

**PLANTATION.** An estate appropriated to the production of staple crops, as the sugar-cane, cotton, rice, tobacco, coffee, etc., by slave labor.

**PLANTER.** 1. A proprietor of land in the Southern States who cultivates staple crops by slave labor.

2. In Newfoundland, a person engaged in the fishery.

3. A term applied to a piece of timber or the naked trunk of a tree, one end of which is firmly planted in the bed of a river, while the other rises near the surface of the water. This is the most dangerous among the "snag and sawyer" family, to which vessels navigating the Western rivers are exposed. See *Snag* and *Sawyer*.

**PLATFORM.** 1. In some parts of the New England States, an ecclesiastical constitution, or a plan for the government of churches; as, the Cambridge or Saybrook *platform*.—*Webster*. The same use of this word is made by English divines.

Their minds and affections were universally bent, even against all the orders and laws wherein the church is founded, conformable to the *platform* of Geneva.—*Hooker*.

A *Platform* of Church Discipline, gathered out of the Word of God, and agreed upon by the elders and messengers of the churches assembled at the synod in Cambridge in New England.—*Title of Book printed in London, 1653*.

2. Of late years the word has got into very common use throughout the country to denote the collection of principles avowed by a political party.

The people should distrust a bad man, even if put upon the best *platform* that ever was constructed, and every plank of which could be stood upon by every American citizen. In like manner they will trust and confide in a man whom they believe to be pure, and honest, and patriotic, and capable, without regard to the *platform* he stands upon, and without caring, in truth, whether he stands upon one at all.—*Lynchburg Virginian, Aug. 1858*.

**PLAYA.** (Span.) A beach; a strand; a shore. In the plains and deserts of the interior, a broad, level spot, where water accumulates after rains, and which afterwards becomes dry by evaporation. These *playas* are prominent features in the topography of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. They are also called "salt lakes," from the nitrous efflorescence with which they are often covered when dry; and which, at a distance, leads the traveller to believe they are basins of water.

We had a perfectly smooth road to the *playa*, which at present is a hard, smooth, and apparently level area of about fifteen miles in length, by nearly ten in width, without a particle of vegetation. These *playas*, in my opinion, have no outlet, and are so nearly level that the rain and drain waters are spread over a large surface; and there being but little absorption, and very rapid evaporation, it is left smooth and baked.—*Lieut. Parke's Report of Survey for Pacific R. R. Official Reports, Vol. II*.

Emerging from the pass into the plain, our eyes were greeted with the sight of a long white streak, which we would have taken for a lake, had it not been called the *Playas*. This *playa* seemed to have an extent of twenty-five or thirty miles. The surface was an indurated clay, so hard that the wheels of our wagons scarce made an impression. After rain, this basin receives a large amount of water, which seems to evaporate before vegetation gets a foothold.—*Bartlett's Personal Narrative, Vol. I* p 246.

**PLAY-ACTOR.** A pleonastic expression for the English term *player* or *actor*. It is objectionable, because the term *actor* is itself a technical word which expresses the full meaning conveyed by the compound.

That which was Shakspeare's specialty, we mean his wonderful dramatic faculty, was not discovered by himself till it became useful to him in his business. For

Shakspeare's avocation was that of a *play-actor*, and subsequently, as a successful one, a *play-house owner*. — (*Balt Sun*, Nov. 12, 1858.

**TO PLAY POSSUM.** "He's *playing 'possum* with you," is a common expression at the South and West, and means that he is deceiving you. The opossum, when attacked by a dog, pretends to be dead, and thus often deceives his pursuers; hence the expression.

Thinks I, That gill is jest trying of me: 'taint no use of *playing possum*; if I don't fetch her out of that high grass, use me for sausage meat. —*N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I will *play possum* with these folks, and take a rise out of them that will astonish their weak nerves. —*S Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 14.

That are stranger's only *playin' possum*, but he can't pull the wool over this child's eyes; he's got 'em both skinned. —*A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 96.

**PLAZA.** (Span.) A public square. A term used in California and other countries recently acquired from the Mexicans.

**PLEAD or PLED**, for *pleaded*. It has been correctly remarked that there is no such word as *pled* in the English language. It is true that the preterite and past participle of the verb *to read* is pronounced *red*; but there is no analogy between the two verbs, except their accidental similarity of sound. The former is the Anglo-Saxon verb *rædan*, and is conjugated accordingly; whereas the latter is the old French *plaidier*, and therefore cannot admit of what philologists call the "strong inflexion." This vulgar mistake is often met with in our reports of legal proceedings and elsewhere. But it is not of recent origin, nor is it exclusively American; as is shown by the following example from Spenser, furnished by Richardson:

With him . . . . . came  
Many grave persons that aganst her *pled*.  
*Spenser, Fairy Queen.*

An old offender was caught last night in a warehouse, with a dark lantern and all the other implements of his profession, and next morning innocently *plead* "sommambulism," when brought before the magistrate — having no recollection of the doings of the night since he went to bed, early in the evening, and found himself in the watch-house in the morning. —*New York Paper*.

**PLEURISY ROOT.** (*Asclepias tuberosa*.) A root which is expectorant and diaphoretic, as well as a mild tonic and stimulant.

**PLUG.** 1. Applied by dentists to a filling of gold or other material inserted in a tooth.

2. A stick of tobacco.

**PLUG UGLY.** A term assumed by a gang of rowdies in Baltimore. It originally belonged to certain fire companies.

**PLUMB**, often written **PLUM**. Directly, exactly. South-western. In English colloquial language both *plump* and *plumb* (or *plum*) are used in this sense.

I tole the boys if they'd come with me, I'd show them one of the most owdacious big rattlesnakes they'd ever seen, what I'd jest kilt. Abel said he was the man what could pack him *plum* home without taking a long breath. —*N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I levelled my rifle at the bear, and shot him *plumb* through the heart. —*Western Sketches*.

He came up and looked me right *plum* in the face, as savage as a meat-axe, and says he, "Give us your paw." —*Southern Sketches*, p. 32.

The ninth day come, and we struck a streak of good luck — a horse give out and broke down *plumb* in the centre of an 'open prairie. —*G. W. Kendall, Story of Bill Dean*.

The original signification of this word is, as the plummet hangs, perpendicular to the horizon, straight down; and hence its secondary meaning of straightforward, directly. Both uses are well illustrated in the following examples. This term, which many suppose an original Westernism, is found in several English writers. Thus Milton says:

He meets

A vast vacuity, all unawares,  
Fluttering his pennons vain, *plumb* down\*he falls.

*Paradise Lost.*

Never was there a more sensible blunder than the following. We recommend it as a motto to gentlemen in the army. "The best way," said Sir Boyle, "to avoid danger, is to meet it *plumb*." —*Barrington, Sketches*.

**PLUMB-CENTRE**. Directly at the centre, in shooting at a mark. Western.

We'd been a watchin' 'em all day, for we knowd thar war somethin' ugly afoot. We seed 'em both fire acrost the gleed, an' right *plum centre* at young Randolph. —*Capt. Mayne Reed, Osceola*, p. 415.

**PLUNDER**. Personal luggage, baggage of travellers, goods, furniture, effects. A very common word throughout the Southern and Western States, corresponding to the Norman French *butin* (booty, goods), which is used in Canada for baggage.

When we got loaded up, I was afraid old Bosen was going to have more 'n his match to pull us, they'd put in so much *plunder*. Two trunks, band-boxes, etc. —*Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 165.

"Help yourself, stranger," added the landlord, "while I tote your *plunder* into the other room." —*Hoffman, Winter in the West*, Let. 33.

The steamboat gun, you know, is the signal to tell us when to look after our *plunder*. —*Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*.

**To POACH**. To tread soft ground, or snow and water, as cattle, whose feet penetrate the soil or soft substance and leave deep tracks. New England.

**POCASON or POQUOSON.** Low wooded grounds or swamps in Eastern Maryland and Virginia, mostly dry in summer and covered with water in winter. They are covered with white oak and other timber. They are sometimes distinguished as white oak or cypress *pocasons*.

We rowed up an arm of the sound, where we were stopped by a miry *pocason*, through which we were obliged to draggle on foot, up to our knees in mud.—*Byrd, Hist. of the Dividing Lane*, p. 15.

**POCKET-BOOK DROPPER.** A mode of deception practised by city sharpers on country flats, at steamboat landings and other places where there is a bustle, is for one of the rogues to drop a pocket-book well filled with worthless bank-notes. This his confederate picks up and opens directly in sight of the victim. He regrets that he has not time to search out the owner, who will be sure to give a handsome reward, and offers to surrender the prize to his rural friend for say ten dollars. All ends as in the "Patent Safe Game," which see.

No man, boy, or greenhorn was ever yet victimized by the *Pocket-book Droppers*, the Thimble Riggers, or the Patent Safe men, who did n't have so strong a spice of the scamp in his own composition, as to think he was coming a sure and profitable swindle upon some one not up to his own level of sharpness and treachery.—*Tricks and Traps of New York City*, p. 24.

**POCKET-BOOK DROPPING.** The species of knavery described in the preceding article.

*Pocket-book Dropping* may almost be considered as one of the by-gones; it being very seldom attempted except in cases of very aggravated verdancy on the part of the victim.—*Tricks and Traps of New York City*, p. 24.

**POHAGEN, or PAUHAGEN.** 1. A species of sea-fish. See *Menhaden*.

2. The term is also applied to a kind of paste-bait for mackerel, etc., made of damaged and frequently putrid fish, chopped or ground in a cutting mill.

**POKE.** 1. A bag. I have heard this old word used by some persons here in the compound term *cream-poke*; that is, a small bag through which cream is strained.—*Pickering*.

2. In New England, a machine to prevent unruly beasts from leaping fences, consisting of a yoke with a pole inserted pointing forward.—*Webster*.

3. A lazy person, a dawdle; as, "What a slow *poke* you are!" A woman's word.

4. Or **POKE-WEED.** (*Phytolacca decandra*.) A common plant, known also by the names of Garget, Cocum, Jalap, etc. It is a violent emetic.

**POKE-BERRY.** The berry of the *Phytolacca*, from which a rich purple juice is extracted, and used as a dye. It is a favorite food for tame mocking birds.

**TO POKE.** To put a poke on; as, to *poke* an ox. — *Webster*.

**TO POKE FUN.** To joke; to make fun. *To poke fun at*, is to ridicule, make a butt of one. Colloquial in England and America.

O fie! Mister Noakes, — for shame, Mr. Noakes!  
To be *poking* your *fun* at us plain-dealing folks.  
Sir, this is n't a time to be cracking your jokes,  
And such jesting your malice but scurvily cloaks,  
And we know very well your story's a hoax!

*Ingoldsby Legends*, Vol. I. p. 280.

I thought you was *pokin' fun* at me; for I am a poor ignorant farmer, and these people are always making game of me. — *Sam Slick*, *Human Nature*, p. 124.

The widow admonished Nimrod, and said, "You had better not be *pokin'* your *fun* about." — *Margaret*, p. 49.

Jeames, if you don't be quit *poking fun* at me, I'll break your mouth, as sure as you sit there. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

How streaked a captain feels when he sees a steamboat a clippin' it by him like mad, and the folks on board *pokin' fun* at him, and askin' him if he has any word to send home! — *Sam Slick*.

**POKE-BONNET.** A long, straight bonnet, much worn by Quakers and Methodists.

**POKE-LOKEN.** An Indian word, used by hunters and lumbermen in Maine, to denote a marshy place or stagnant pool, extending into the land from a stream or lake.

The wild fowl are amazing fond of *pokelokens*. — *Sam Slick*.

Crocodiles can cry when they are hungry; but when they do, it's time to vamose the *pokelokens*. — *Id. Human Nature*, p. 331.

**POKER.** 1. (Dan. *pokker*, Welsh, *pwca*, a hobgoblin.) Any frightful object, especially in the dark; a bugbear. A word in common use in America. — *Webster*.

2. A favorite game of cards among Western gamblers.

At a court in —, Kentucky, the case of *Smith vs. Brown* was called up. "Who's for the plaintiff?" inquired the judge, impatiently.

"May it please the court," said a rising member of the legal fraternity, "Pilkins is for the plaintiff; but I left him just now over in the tavern playing a game of *poker*. He's got a 'sucker' there, and he is sure to skun him if he only has time. He's got the thing all set to ring a 'cold deck,' in which case he'll deal for himself four aces and his opponent four queens; so that your honor will perceive he must 'rake the persimmons.'"

"Dear me!" said the judge, with a sigh, that's too bad! It happens at a very unfortunate time; I am very anxious to get on with these cases."

A brown study followed, and at length a happy idea struck the judge.

"Bill," said he, addressing the friend of the absent Pilkins, who had spoken, "you understand *poker* about as well as Pilkins. Suppose you go over and play his hand."  
— *Western paper*.



**POKERISH.** Frightful; causing fear, especially to children. A childish or colloquial word. — *Worcester*.

A curious old convent [in Naples] with chapels above and below — a *pokerish* looking place, fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. — *N. Y. Literary World*, Aug. 1847.

**POKY.** Dull, stupid.

That's the way we girls studied at school except a few *pokey* ones, who wanted to be learned. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 138.

A *pokey* old house like ours. — *Miss Fullerton, Grantley Manor*.

**POLITICAL CAPITAL.** Political stock in trade, means of political advancement.

All who feel an interest in the peace of the country, and who are not disposed to turn every thing into *political capital*, must feel rejoiced over the result in Kansas. — *New York Times*, Oct. 14, 1857.

**TO POLITICATE.** To make a trade of politics.

He [Senator Hunter] proposes to put all new clerks into the lower offices, and to promote them for services rendered and for efficiency. Nobody can doubt that this is a most admirable plan. It would stop the quadrennial rush to Washington, and make many a citizen quit *politicating* and turn to hard work. — *Richmond Whig*, July, 1858.

**POMME BLANCHE.** (*Psoralea esculenta*.) A native of the prairies and mountains, oval-shaped and about three and a half inches in circumference. It is encased in a thin fibrous tegument, which, when removed, exposes a white pulpy substance, and in taste resembles a turnip. Called also Pomme de Prairie and Indian Turnip.

**POMPION BERRY.** Another name for the fruit of *Celtis occidentalis*. See *Hackberry*.

**POND.** We give this name to collections of water in the interior country, which are fed by springs, and from which issues a small stream. These *ponds* are often a mile or two or even more in length, and the current issuing from them is used to drive the wheels of mills and furnaces. — *Webster*.

There were streams meandering among hills and valleys; little lakes or *ponds*, as they were erroneously called in the language of the country, dotted the surface. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 144.

**PONE.** Bread made of the meal of Indian corn, with the addition of eggs and milk. Southern. William Penn in his account of Pennsylvania, published in 1683, says *pone* was the Indian name for bread.

In a poetical work called the "Sot-weed Factor, or a voyage to Maryland, London, 1708," the author thus describes the tables of the planters.

While *pone* and milk, with mush well stored,  
In wooden dishes graced the board;  
With homine and cyder pap  
Which scarce a hungry dog would lap.

We all clustered around the fire, the landlady alone passing through our semi-circle, as she prepared the *pone* and fry, and coffee for supper. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

**PONY-PURSE.** A subscription collected upon the spot, or from a few persons.

**TO PONY UP.** A vulgar phrase, meaning to pay over money. Ex. "Come, Mr. Brown, *pony up* that account;" that is, pay over the money. Grose gives a phrase similar to it: "Post the *pony*," i. e. lay down the money.

It was my job to pay all the bills. "Salix, *pony up* at the bar, and lend us a levy." — *J. C. Neal, Sketches*.

**POOR DOE.** Among the Texan hunters the term *poor doe* is applied, regardless of gender, to any deer that may happen to be lean. — *G. W. Kendall*.

In less time than it takes us to record it, the veteran hunter had cut a shoulder and some of the more delicate and eatable portions from the deer; and then, rolling the remainder and larger portion out of the way with his foot, remarked that it was but "*poor doe*" I told him that it was no doe at all, but a young buck — I could not say much as to its fatness. He gave another half-laugh, etc. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Exped.*, Vol. I. p. 35.

**POOQUAW.** (Narraganset Ind., *poquawhock*.) The round clam, so called in Nantucket. In other parts of New England it is shortened to *Quahaug*.

The *Poquawhock* is a little thick shell-fish which the Indians wade deepe and dive for; and after they have eaten the meat there (in those which are good), they breake out of the shell about halfe an inch of a blacke part of it, of which they make their Suckahock, or black money, which is to them pretious. — *Roger Williams, in R. I. Hist. Coll.*, Vol. I. pp. 104, 130.

**POOR FOLKSY.** Like, or after the fashion of, poor people. Southern.

**POOR WHITE FOLKS.** A term applied by the blacks to the poor white population of the South, also called the Mean Whites. A common and still more contemptuous appellation is Poor White Trash. See *White Trash*.

**POOR WHITE FOLKSY.** Like or after the fashion of the Poor White Folks. Southern.

As for making up my mind to like my new master, you may preach till your hair turns grey and I wont do it. For all his shiny boots and spick-span broadcloth, he looks dreadful *poor-white-folksy* to me. — *The Hidden Path*.

**TO POP CORN.** To parch or roast Indian corn until it "pops" open. The

corn is laid over the fire on a shovel or wire gauze made for the purpose, until it bursts, when it curls up, swells to treble its size, and exposes its white interior.

One autumn night when the wind was high,  
And the rain fell in heavy plashes,  
A little boy sat by the kitchen fire,  
A *popping corn* in the ashes.  
And his sister, a curly-haired child of three,  
Sat looking on just close to his knee.

Pop, pop! and the kernels one by one,  
Came out of the embers flying;  
The boy held a long pine stick in his hand,  
And kept it busily plying.  
He stirred the corn and it snapped the more,  
And faster jumped to the clean white floor. — *Anonymous*.

**POP-CORN.** A kind of Indian corn which easily "pops" or bursts open, when roasted in the manner above described. It is of a dark color, and has small grains.

**POP-EYED.** Having prominent eyes. Southern.

**POPLAR.** See *Tulip Tree*.

**POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY.** The rule of the people, the right of the people to form the constitution under which they are to live.

He [Senator Douglas] has only vindicated the South's doctrine against the impending success of a dishonest attempt to secure for the South the supposed benefit of the doctrine of *popular sovereignty*. — *Richmond Examiner*, July, 1858.

**PORGY, or PAUGIE.** (Pron. with the *g* hard.) A fish of the *sparus* family, common in the waters of New England and New York. Roger Williams mentions it in his *Key to the Indian Language* (1643). It is singular that one half the aboriginal name, *scup*, should be retained for this fish in Rhode Island, and the other half, *paug*, changed into *paugie* or *porgy*, in New York. The entire Indian name, however, is still common in many parts of New England. See *Scuppaug*.

Daniel Webster, who, it is well known, was a zealous disciple of Walton's, in writing to his friend Mr. Blatchford, from Wood's Hole, says :

In the afternoon, I went out in the boat and caught some fish, namely, tautog and scuppog, the same I suppose, as are called *porgy* in New York. — *Private Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 33.

**PORTAGE.** A carrying-place over land between navigable waters, or along the banks of rivers, round water-falls or rapids, etc. — *Pickering*. This word has been adopted by geographers, and is universal throughout North America. The *Portage* Railroad in Pennsylvania is a line over the Alleghany mountains connecting two lines of canal.

**PORTAAL.** (Dutch.) A portal, lobby. Used by people of Dutch descent, in New Jersey and New York, for a small passage or entry of a house. The principal entrance they call the *gang*; also Dutch.

**POSITION.** “*Defining one’s position*” is a political practice of modern days, generally resorted to either by gentlemen who have no other good chance or prospect of bringing themselves to the special notice of the public, as a sort of advertisement that they are in the market, or by other gentlemen who contemplate making a dodge from one side in politics to the other. It is done either orally or in writing; by a speech in Congress or at some public meeting; or by a long letter, published in some newspaper, the editor of which is always glad of something to fill his columns. The highest art in “*defining one’s position*” is to leave it more indefinite than it was before, so that any future contingency may be taken advantage of. — [*J. Inman.*]

The Barnburners’ Mass Meeting, to *non-respond* to the nominations of Cass and Butler, will take place in the Park at five this afternoon, and be addressed by John Van Buren, B. F. Butler, Sedgwick, Field, Gen. Nye, etc., etc. We regret that unavoidable absence at Philadelphia will deprive us of the pleasure of hearing these gentlemen “*define their position*,” especially Prince John, who has the reputation of being the most straightforward, plain-spoken, flat-footed ‘Burner in the country. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 6, 1848.

**POSSUM.** A common contraction of *Opossum*, as in the negro’s eloquent appeal to his mistress:

*Possum* up a gum tree, cooney in de holler;  
Come along wid me, my dear, I ’ll gib you quarter dollar.

**TO POSSUM.** To feign, dissemble. An expression alluding to the habit of the opossum, which throws itself on its back and feigns death on the approach of an enemy. This is also and more commonly called *playing possum*.

In the common parlance of the country, any one who counterfeits sickness, or dissembles strongly for a particular purpose, is said to be *possuming*. — *Flint’s Geogr. of Mississippi Valley*, p. 67.

**TO POST.** To *post* or *post up* a person is to bring his knowledge up to date, to make him acquainted with recent occurrences; so that a person *well posted* is one who is well informed. The phrase is borrowed from the counting-house.

Mrs. Fudge has kept a close eye upon equipages, hats, cloaks, habits, churches, different schemes of faith and of summer recreation. She is well *posted up* in all these matters. — *Ik. Marvel, Fudge Doings*.

**POST-NOTE.** In commerce, a bank-note intended to be transmitted to a distant place by mail, and made payable to order. In this it differs from a common bank-note, which is payable to bearer. — *Webster*.

*Post-notes* differ in other respects from bank-notes. The latter are payable on demand; the former are often drawn on time, with or without interest, sometimes six or twelve months after date. This species of currency was resorted to by many banks during the great commercial revulsions in 1836-7, and contributed greatly to the expansion of credits which proved so disastrous to the country.

**POTATO GRANT.** A patch of land for growing vegetables formerly granted by the owner to each of his slaves. West Indies.

**POTASH KETTLES.** A term applied in the West to roundish elevations and depressions in the earth near the great lakes. They are attributed to the decay and washing away of the soft and easily decomposed limestone by which the ridges where they are found are probably underlaid.

**POT-HOLE.** In many parts of the country are found circular holes of various diameters and depths formed by the action of water in rolling a small boulder in what was at first a natural depression of the rock. It is a common notion in the West that these were made by the Indians to pound corn in, whence they are often called "Indian mortars."

Every little torrent has its furrowed channel, and often its deep *pot-holes*, as a result of the action of the water; and it would be most strange if the great flood of Niagara should rush on its course for ages and produce no appreciable effect. — *R. Bakewell, in Sill. Journ.* Vol. XXIII p. 86.

**POT-PIE.** A pie made by spreading the crust over the bottom and sides of a pot, and filling up the inside with meat, i. e. beef, veal, mutton, or fowls.

An enormous *pot-pie*, and piping hot, graced our centre, overpowering, with its fragrance and steam, the odors and vapors of all other meats; and *pot-pie* was the wedding dish of the country, par excellence! The pie to-day was the doughy sepulchre of at least six hens, two chanticloers, and four pullets! What pot could have contained the pie is inconceivable. Why, among other unknown contributions, it must have received one half peck of onions! And yet it is to be feared that many would be *pot-pieless* — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 181.

**POT-WALLOPER.** A scullion.

**POT-WRESTLER.** A scullion. Pennsylvania.

**POTTY-BAKER.** (Dutch, *pottebakker*.) A potter. This Dutch word is still common in New York. Potter's clay is there called *potty-baker's clay*.

**POWER.** A large quantity; a great number. In low language; as, "a *power* of good things." — *Johnson*. Little used in this country, except by the Irish.

He, to work him the more mischief, sent over his brother Edward, with a *power* of Scots and Redshanks, into Ireland, where they got footing. — *Spenser on Ireland*.

I think the Post-Office Committees will do a *power* of good, if they can stir up the old contracts and extras. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 118.

He made a *power* of money. — *Ibid.* p. 59.

**POWER AND CERTIFICATE.** During the time the books of a company are closed for the payment of a dividend, for an election, or for any purpose, there can be no transfer of stock, or the issue of a new certificate. Most of the sales of stock made during the closing of the books are deliverable on the opening; all contracts, whether buyer's or seller's option, that mature during the same time, are carried forward to the opening; but occasionally a sale is made where the buyer requires immediate delivery. In that case the old certificate is delivered, with a power of attorney attached, for the transfer on or after the opening of the books. These transactions are reported in the stock-list, with the letters *p* and *c*, which means power and certificate. Sales for cash, made during the closing of the books, not marked *p* and *c*, are for the opening of the books, and are marked *opg*. — *Hunt's Merchants' Mag.* Vol. XXXVII.

**POWERFUL.** Great; very, exceedingly. A vulgar use of the word in some parts of the country.

This piano was sort o' fiddle like — only bigger, — and with a *powerful* heap of wire strings. It is called a forty piano, because it plays forty tunes. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 8

Yes, Mr Speaker, I'd a *powerful* sight sooner go into retracy among the red, wild aborigines of our wooden country, nor consent to that bill. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 74.

It may be said generally of husbands, as the old woman said of hers, who had abused her, to an old maid, who reproached her for being such a fool as to marry him: "To be sure, he's not so good a husband as he should be, but he's a *powerful* sight better than none." — *N. Y. Sunday Dispatch*.

*Mrs. S.* Hoarhound and sugar's amazin' good.

*Mrs. B.* Mighty good, mighty good.

*Mrs. R.* *Powerful* good. I take mightily to a sweat of sugar tea in desperate bad colds. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 193.

I hated *powerful* had to part with the horse. — *Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 85.

"John," says father, when I was leavin', "you've been out in the world, seen the sights, and have got to be considdeble smart; now, John, look out for your brother, he's so *powerful* green, 'taint safe for him to come near the cows, for fear they might eat him." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Pow-wow.** (Abenaki Ind.) This is the name given by the early chroniclers to the feasts, dances, and other public doings of the red men, preliminary to a grand hunt, a council, a war expedition, or the like. It has been adopted in political talk, to signify any uproarious meeting for a political purpose, at which there is more noise than deliberation, more clamor than counsel. — [*J. Inman.*]

A murder was recently committed upon a Sioux by two Chippewas. The body of the murdered Indian was taken to the fort, where a most terrific *pow-wow* was held over it by the friends of the deceased, three hundred in number. — *Western Newspaper*.

As I live, the savages scent the whiskey! There is a rush towards, and a *pow-wow* in and about the shed. — *Cooper, Oak Openings*

I was in Philadelphia when the Know Nothings were holding their grand national *pow-wow* there, and laying it on thick that "Americans shall rule America." — *Letter in N. Y. Herald*, June 22, 1855.

The students are forbidden to occupy the State House steps on the evening of presentation day; since the faculty design hereafter to have a *pow-wow* there, as on the last — *Burlesque Catalogue, Yale College*, 1852-53.

**To Pow-wow.** To perform a ceremony with conjurations for the cure of diseases and other purposes, with noise and confusion.

At a distance, with my Bible in my hand, I was resolved if possible to spoil their [the Indians'] spirit of *pow-wowing*, and prevent their receiving an answer from the infernal world. — *Brainerd, Indian Narrative*, 1745.

The Angekok of the Esquimaux — the prophet, as he is called among our Indians — is the general counsellor. He prescribes or *pow-wows* in sickness and over wounds, directs the policy of the little State, and is really the power behind the throne. — *Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. II. p. 118.

**PRAIRIE.** (French.) An extensive tract of land, mostly level, destitute of trees, and covered with tall, coarse grass. These prairies are numerous in the United States west of the Alleghany Mountains, especially between the Ohio, Mississippi, and the great lakes. — *Webster*. See also *Rolling Prairie*, *Salt Prairie*, and *Soda Prairie*.

These are the gardens of the desert, these  
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,  
For which the speech of England has no name —  
The *Prairies*. *Bryant, The Prairies*.

**PRAIRIE BITTERS.** A beverage common among the hunters and mountaineers. It is made with a pint of water and a quarter of a gill of buffalo gall, and is considered an excellent medicine. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 133.

**PRAIRIE DOG.** (*Cynomys ludovicianus*.) A variety of the marmot. It has received the name of Prairie-dog from a supposed similarity between its warning cry and the barking of a small dog. They live in large communities; their villages, as they are termed by the hunters, sometimes being many miles in extent. The entrance to each burrow is at the summit of the mound of earth thrown up during the progress of the excavation below. This marmot, like the rest of the species, becomes torpid during the winter, and, to protect itself against the rigor of the season, stops the mouth of its hole, and constructs a cell at the bottom of it, where it remains without injury. — *Encycl. Americana*.

**PRAIRIE-HEN.** (*Tetrao pratensis*.) A bird seen in great flocks in the prairies of Missouri and Illinois, in the autumn. It is rather larger than the domestic hen. In flight it appears like the pheasant and partridge, and is a beautiful bird. — *Flint's Mississippi Valley*. It is also called Heath-hen and Pinnated Grouse.

We saw great flights of *prairie-hens*, or grouse, that hovered from tree to tree, or sat in rows on naked branches. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**PRAIRIE-SQUIRRELS.** (Genus, *Spermophilus*.) These are with great propriety called "*Prairie-Squirrels*;" for their true home is on the prairie, where they replace the "arboreal" squirrels, from which they differ in organization, to suit their necessarily different mode of life. While the true squirrels are designed to live in trees, and to subsist upon their fruits, the spermophiles are fitted to inhabit the grassy plains which cover much of the western part of our Union, their food being the prairie plants with their roots and seeds. The form of these squirrels is adapted only to locomotion on the ground. The body is thick and heavy, with short legs; and in place of the long toes and sharp, hooked nails by which the arboreal squirrels cling to the trees so readily, they have shorter toes, with longer and straighter nails, for digging burrows in the earth. The long, flexible, and bushy tails, which aid the squirrels in their bold leaps, and keep them warm in their holes in winter, would here be useless, and soon worn ragged by dragging through their burrows. The spermophiles, therefore, have smaller tails, that are carried straight behind them. They have cheek-pouches in which to carry food; and two species, at least, convey roots, seeds, etc., to their burrows to be eaten. — *R. Kennicott*.

**PRAIRIE-STATE.** The State of Illinois.

**PRAIRIE-WOLF.** (*Canis latrans*.) The small wolf of the prairies, the Coyote of the Mexicans. Its range extends from Fort Riley, Kansas, to the Pacific, and from the Upper Missouri to the Rio Grande of Texas.

The *prairie-wolf*  
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh dug den  
Yawns by my path. — *Bryant*.

**PRAIRILLON.** A small prairie.

Interspersed among the hills are frequent openings and *prairillons* of rich soil and luxuriant vegetation. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 172.

**PRAWCHEY.** (Dutch, *praatje*.) A talk, gossip. New York.

**PRAYERFUL.** Using prayer; praying; devout. — *Worcester*.

**PRAYERFULLY.** Devoutly. Ex. "We may be *prayerfully* disposed."  
Used by some of the clergy. — *Pickering*.



PRAYERFULNESS. The use of much prayer.—*Webster*.

PRAYERLESSNESS. Total or habitual neglect of prayer. — *Webster*.

TO PREACH A FUNERAL. To preach a funeral sermon. Western.

PRECINCT. A subdivision of a county or city within which a single poll is held at elections.

In case of non-acceptance [of the collector], the parish or *precinct* shall proceed to a new choice. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

In Franklin Co, Kansas, they had no county commissioner whose duty it is to appoint voting *precincts* besides the county seat. — *New York Times*, Oct. 9, 1857.

TO PREDICATE ON OR UPON. To found a proposition, argument, etc., on some basis or data. This sense of the word, said to be purely American, is not noticed by Dr. Webster or the English lexicographers. "Its use," as Mr. Pickering observes, "is very common with American writers, and in the debates of our legislative assemblies."

It ought surely to be *predicated upon* a full and impartial consideration of the whole subject. — *Letter of John Quincy Adams*.

The great State papers of American liberty were all *predicated on* the abuse of chartered, not of absolute, rights. — *Gibbs, Adminis. of Washington and J. Adams*, Vol. I p. 3.

TO PRE-EMPT. To secure land, by being the first settler or occupant of it, in conformity with the preëmption law.

The following account of the process of *preëmpting* lands is from the National Intelligencer, Washington, July 1, 1857 :

The laws of the United States give the right to any citizen who does not own three hundred and twenty acres of land in any State of the Union (and to this he is required to make oath) to *preëempt* one hundred and sixty acres, by fulfilling the detailed requirements of the act. These requirements are, that he shall file his intention in the land-office to enter upon and improve the land, either by cultivating it or erecting thereon a home, and residing upon the land long enough to make it his residence; which time is variously estimated to mean one or five days, just as the Receiver at any land-office may decide. To the fact that he has so resided and made said improvements he must produce a witness, who testifies that such and such things have been done, and that the preëmptor has resided the required time in the house on the land. Upon fulfilling all these requirements and paying one dollar and a quarter per acre, either in gold or a land warrant, and the fees, he receives a certificate of title. A duplicate of this is sent to the Secretary of the Interior at Washington, who, after having searched the records, and finding that the individual has not *preëmpted* before, issues a patent direct to him, and he becomes the owner of his farm by title direct from the government.

Isaac Lawrence, of New York, a negro, addressed Governor Marcy a note, inquiring if he could *preëempt* government lands in Minnesota, the same as white persons could. The letter was referred to Secretary McClelland, who in reply said :

I have to state that there is nothing in the laws of the United States which would prevent you, as a free man of African descent, from settling upon public land in the territory of Minnesota, and acquiring a right of *preemption*.

**PRE-EMPTION RIGHT.** The right or title which an original settler or squatter has to become the first purchaser of unsurveyed government land, of which he has taken possession. To maintain this right, he must have erected a habitation, or taken some steps towards the cultivation of the land. This term has long been in use, as Imlay, in his work on the Western Territory, published in 1797, says :

The settlement began to form in 1780, and was encouraged by settlements and *preemption rights*. — p. 14.

Among the public acts of Congress is one entitled,

"An act to appropriate the proceeds of the public lands and to grant *preemption rights*"

**PREHAPS**, for *perhaps*, is much used at the West in familiar language, when additional force is to be given to the word. It originated in a jocose mispronunciation, which appears to be becoming a fixed corruption.

*Perhaps* Parson Hyme did n't put it into Pokerville for two mortal hours ; and *prehaps* Pokerville did n't mizzle, wince, and finally flummix right beneath him ! — *Field, Drama in Pokerville*.

**PRESENT.** This word is put on the back of letters to persons residing in the place where they are written, and which are not to be sent through the mail. Peculiar to the United States. The Spanish equivalent, *presente*, is also used in Central America.

**PRESIDENCY.** 1. The office of president. "Washington was elected to the *presidency* of the United States by a unanimous vote of the electors."

2. The term during which a president holds his office. "President John Adams died during the *presidency* of his son." — *Webster*.

**PRESIDENT.** 1. The chief magistrate of the United States.

The executive power shall be vested in a *President* of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, etc. — *Constitution of the U. States*.

2. The chief officer of a college or university.

**PRESIDENTIAL.** Pertaining to a president. — *Webster*. In this sense the word is an Americanism. It is of course very common and indispensable with us, and is sometimes used by English writers in treating of American affairs.

The friends of Washington had determined to support Mr. Adams as candidate for the *presidential* chair. — *Quarterly Rev.*, Vol. X. p. 497.

**PRESIDIO.** (Span.) A military post on the Mexican frontier. Many of these places are now within the United States, and still retain the old Spanish name. Sometimes the term is applied to a fortress, at others to the entire village that surrounds it.

The viceroy of Mexico sent the gallant Oñate to New Mexico, to take formal possession of the country, and to establish colonies, missions, and *presidios*. — *Wislizenus, Northern Mexico*, 1848.

**PRETTY CONSIDERABLE.** 1. Of some consequence, tolerable, passable, middling. Used in this sense in England as well as America.

To the faculty of law was joined a *pretty considerable* proportion of the faculty of medicine. — *Burke, Reflections on the French Rev.*

But you seem to have something *pretty considerable* in the right pocket of your trowsers; what may it be? Why, that's a wee bit pewter whiskey-flask, yer honor. — *Scrope's Deer Stalking*, 74.

I went to the theatre in Boston, where the acting was *pretty considerable*, considering. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 87.

2. Tolerably, passably, middlingly.

*Dear Col. Crockett*, — I have heard of you a great deal lately, and read considerable of your writings; and I feel *pretty considerable* well acquainted with you. — *Maj. Downing, Letter to Crockett, Tour*, p. 217.

There are some folks who think a good deal, and say but little, and they are wise folks; and there are others again who blurt out whatever comes uppermost, and I guess they are *pretty considerable* superfine fools. — *Sam Slick*.

I went into the business of pepper-pot smoking, and went ahead *pretty considerable* for a time; but a parcel of fellows came into it, said my cats was n't as good as their'n, when I know'd they was as flesh as any cats in the market, and pepper-pot was no go. — *J. C. Neal, Sketches*.

**PRETTY.** Any thing pretty; an ornament, toy, picture. Western.

Thinks I, this is all talk and no cider; and I asked if any lady or gentleman wanted a picture. A dead silence ensued; then a titter. At length one of the chaps said to his sweetheart:

"Betty, suppose you have your *pretty* taken." — "*Daguerreotyping*," *Ev.* (*Wash. Star*).

**PRETTY MIDDLING.** Tolerably well.

When we came to the steep, sandy side of the mountain [Hecla], it would be safe to believe that we went down *pretty middling*. — *P. Miles, Rambles in Iceland*, p. 78.

**PREVENTATIVE.** A corruption sometimes met with for *preventive*, both in England and America.

A cry was raised for the establishment of a *preventative* armed police; but the madness of such a proposal could not long escape observation. — *Edinb. Annual Reg.* Vol. V. p. 99.

Confidence in the press, and a belief in its statements concerning this cholera, are the most powerful *preventatives* of panic. — *N. Y. Express*, Aug. 6, 1849.

**PRICKLY HEAT.** A cutaneous eruption or rash which appears during the excessive heat of summer.

**PRICKLY PEAR.** (*Opuntia vulgaris*.) A sort of flat jointed cactus, which is found in sandy fields and about dry rocks, from Massachusetts southward, usually near the coast.

**PRIME.** In a first-rate manner; primely. This is one of the many English adjectives which, in our vulgar language, are transformed into adverbs.

After a little practice with my gun, she came up to the eye *prime*, and I determined to try her at the first shooting-match. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 175

**PRIMING.** As the *priming* bears but a small proportion to the charge of a gun, so this word is used in the West to denote any thing trivial, like the word *circumstance*; as, "Your corn crop ain't a *priming* to mine," i. e. is very small in comparison with it.

Stranger, you may say what you please about your anacondy serpent of Ceylon, in South America; and your rael Bengall tiger from Africa; both on 'em, heated to a white heat and welded into one, would be no part of a *priming* to a grizzly bear of the Rocky Mountains. — *Crockett's Adventures with a Grizzly Bear*.

**PRIMARY.** A predicament; difficulty. Used in the Southern States. — *Sherwood's Georgia*. I am told that this word is also used by old people living on Long Island. It is provincial in the North of England.

**TO PRIMP, or PRIMP UP.** To dress up in a finical manner; to linger over one's toilet. A woman's expression.

After supper I washed, then I put on the cleanest sort of a shirt that Aunt Jane had fixed up mity nice an' smooth, then I drawed on about as nice a set uv Sunday harness as you ever seed; and arter marm and Aunt Jane had *primped* up an' fixed my har an' creevat, I was reddy. — *How Sal and Me got Married*.

**PRIMPY.** Fastidious in the duties of the toilet, finical. A woman's word.

**PRINCE'S PRIDE.** See *Pipsissewa*.

**PRINTERY.** An establishment for printing cottons, etc.; print-works. Rare. — *Worcester*.

**PROCESSIONER.** An officer in Kentucky, and possibly in other States, whose duty it is to determine and mark out the bounds of lands.

**PROFANITY.** This word is in common use here, more particularly with our clergy. It is not in the dictionaries, and I do not recollect ever meeting with it in English authors. The Scottish writers employ it; but English writers use the word *profaneness*. — *Pickering*. Worcester, however, states that it is used by respectable English authors.

PROFESSOR. 1. One who makes a profession of any thing. — *Worcester*. The application of the word to dancing-masters, conjurers, banjo-players, etc., has been called an Americanism. It is thought, however, that even in Yankeeland, the following, copied by the *Nat. Intelligencer* of Nov. 11, 1858, from an English paper, would be "hard to beat."

A great shaving match against time was performed recently at Keighley, near Leeds. A "*Professor Carrodus*," attended by three latherers and five stoppers, engaged to shave seventy men in sixty minutes, and succeeded in performing the task four minutes within the specified time.

2. One visibly or professedly religious. — *Worcester*. A very odd use of the word to those not accustomed to it.

"Ah!" said Miss Rayby, "and I can remember the time — of course I was very young then, but still I can remember — when Caleb Edmonds swept out his own shop!"

"Dear me! And now he has the upstart impudence to send his girl to such a school as that!" exclaimed Miss Sophia Milwood, the spinster who had not yet spoken. "Oh, the pride of human nature."

"And he a *professor* too!"

"*Professor!*" said Miss Rayby. "Religion does not teach a man such absurd pride as that!"

Miss Phillip shook her head, and began to lament the increase of false *professors*. — *The Dream of Caleb Edmonds*.

TO PROGRESS. To move forward; to pass. — *Johnson*. This is not a pure Americanism, as some suppose, but an old English word which had been suffered to become obsolete. It was revived here after the Revolution (see Pickering), and has lately been taken into favor again in England.

The Penny Cyclopædia (art. *Americanism*) says, "The old verb *pro-gress*, which the Americans use very often and pronounce *progréss*, is now beginning to be again adopted in its native country, though we think we could do very well without it."

Let me wipe off this honorable dew,  
That silverly doth *progress* on thy cheeks. — *Shakspeare*.

— Although the popular blast  
Hath reared thy name up to bestride a cloud,  
Or *progress* in the chariot of the sun. — *Ford, Broken Heart*.

Such are the inconsistencies of a flatterer, *progressing* from his butterfly state into the vermicular slime of a libeller. — *London Quarterly Review*.

Her first teacher was but himself, at that time a pupil; but she *progressed* under his tuition. — *Mary Howitt, People's Journal*.

The launch of the "*Leviathan*" will be by no means a slapdash affair into the "native element," but a tedious operation, which will very probably occupy two or three days. On these points, and some others of equal interest, we shall give our readers fuller information as the great ship *progresses* towards completion. — *London Times*, April 30, 1857.

They *progress* in that style in proportion as their plans are treated with contempt.  
— *Washington's Writings*.

After the war had *progressed* for some time. — *Marshall's Washington*.

Whether this word was used in the time of Bacon or not, I cannot say, yet it seems he employs it in the spirit world; for, in the asserted revelations made by Judge Edmonds, the philosopher says:

I trust that your own hearts will respond to mine, and the many, very many spirits who are present, till all our souls, like one spirit, shall unite in the harmonies of truth, love, and the earnest desire to *progress*. — *Spiritualism*, p. 333.

**PROGRESSIVE FRIENDS.** A name recommended at a convention of Spiritualists held in Illinois, Sept. 7, 1857, to be adopted by them, "as being a cognomen most indicative of that broad liberality of sentiment which they desire to foster and maintain."

**PRONG.** A branch or arm of a creek or inlet. Southern.

**PRONG-HORN ANTELOPE.** (*Antilocapra americana*.) The *Prong-horn Antelope* is familiar to every hunter on the plains west of the Missouri River. From this line it extends to the Pacific Ocean, and ranges from northern Mexico to the latitude of 53° on the Saskatchewan. It is also abundant in Minnesota, especially on the plains of Red River. The antelope is highly prized as an article of food. They run with great swiftness, and all their motions are characterized by ease and grace. — *S. F. Baird*.

**TO PRONOUNCE.** In Nantucket they say, "How does your horse *pronounce*?" i. e. how does he prove or perform?

**PROPER.** Very, exceedingly. Colloquial in England and the United States.

The day was gone afore I got out of the woods, and I got *proper* frightened. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 18.

**PROPERLY.** Very much. Common in New England.

Father jest up with the flat of his hand, and gave me a wipe with it on the side of my face, that knocked me over and hurt me *properly*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 26.

**PROPIOS.** (Span.) In Spanish-American law, certain portions of ground laid off and reserved, on the foundation of a town, as the unalienable property of the town, for the purpose of erecting public buildings, markets, etc., or to be used in any other way, under the direction of the municipality, for the advancement of the revenues or the prosperity of the place. — *Peters's Reports*, Vol. XII. p. 442, note.

**PRO-SLAVERY.** In favor of slavery. An expression much used by political speakers and writers, although not yet inserted in the dictionaries.

It takes a despot, a craven, and a slave, compounded together, to make a *pro-slavery* legislator in a free State. — *Anti-Slavery Almanac*.

*Pro-slavery* men, strike for your altars ! stake for your rights ! Sound the bugle of war over your land, and leave not an abolitionist in the country. — *Kickapoo Pioneer*, Jan 18, 1856.

**PROSPECTING.** Hunting or searching for lead, gold, or other metals. The process is thus described in a sketch of Life on the Upper Mississippi :

The chief mart of the lead trade is in the town of Galena, built upon a small, sluggish stream. In travelling through the upland prairie of this neighborhood, you will see many hillocks of earth, as far as the eye can reach, as if some huge animal had been burrowing beneath, and had thrown up the dirt in that manner, but you may, by chance, meet two or three men with a bucket, a rope, a pick-axe, and a portable windlass, and the difficulty is explained. This, in the language of the country, is a *prospecting* party, which, being interpreted, means that they are on the look-out for ore, if it is to be found within ten or fifteen feet of the ground — *N. Y. Literary World*, June 3, 1848.

Our claim [near Haugtown, Cal.] did not prove rich enough to satisfy us ; so we abandoned it and went *prospecting*. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 124.

I've gin up diggin' and *prospectin'*. It don't pay ; and I can make more by tellin' new comers whar to sink their shaft. If they find gold, I get half ; and if they don't, I charge nothin'. — *Let from California, N. Y. Times*.

**PROSPECTOR.** A searcher for spots where minerals exist, applied alike to the precious metals, copper, or coal.

A *prospector* goes out with a pick and shovel, and a washpan ; and to test the richness of a place, he digs down till he reaches the dirt in which it may be expected gold will be found. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 124.

**PROTRACTED MEETING.** A name given in New England to a religious meeting, protracted or continued for several days, chiefly among the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Baptists. Notice is sometimes given that a *protracted meeting* will be held at a certain time and place, where large numbers of people assemble. In the West they are called "big meetings."

A religious sensation is raging terribly in my neighborhood, induced by the influence of the expected comet, — there is a *protracted meeting* round the corner, and high-pressure prayer meetings on every side. — *Doesticks*.

I'm a gentleman that calculates to hold a *protracted meeting* here to-night. — *Sam Slick, Nature and Human Nature*.

You don't suppose a pedlar that had experienced religion at a *protracted meetin'* would cheat a clergyman ? What an idee ! — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 219.

**PROUD.** Glad ; as, "I should be *proud* to see you."

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow, the facetious editor of the Jonesboro' Whig, in an article on his own obituary, says :

He desires it stated to the world, that if he had his life to live over again, he could improve it in many respects. He leaves no apologies to be made to men in

this life, and asks no favors of anybody "on the other side of Jordan," but his God! His friends, if he have any left behind, can be of no service to him; his enemies, he is *proud* to know, "can't reach him!"

**PROX, or PROXY.** The use of these words is confined to the States of Connecticut and Rhode Island. *Prox*, in Rhode Island, means the ticket or list of candidates at elections presented to the people for their votes. By a law of the colony of Providence Plantations, passed in the year 1647, the General Assembly was appointed to be holden annually, "if wind and weather hinder not, at which the general officers of the colony were to be chosen." This clause made it convenient for many to remain at home, particularly as they had the right to send their votes for the officers by some other persons; hence the origin of these terms *prox* and *proxy votes*, as applied to the present mode of voting for State officers in Rhode Island. — *Staples's Annals of Providence*, p. 64.

Mr. Pickering observes that this word is also used in Connecticut, as equivalent to *election*, or *election-day*. He quotes the following instances from a Connecticut newspaper :

Republicans of Connecticut; previous to every *proxies* you have been assaulted on every side.

On the approaching *proxies* we ask you to attend universally.

Dr. Webster, with whom New England, or rather Connecticut, seems to have been a synonyme for "all creation," says, the word means, "*in popular use*, an election or day of voting for officers of government."

When the qualification of a freeman, as formerly, was low, the *proxies* or voters never exceeded 1,300; at present the qualification is better, and the *proxies* are only 888. — *Douglass's Summary*, 1755, Vol. II. p. 89.

**PRY.** A large lever employed to raise or move heavy substances. Used also in some parts of England. — *Worcester*.

**TO PRY.** To move or raise by means of a large lever. — *Worcester*.

**PUBLISHPMENT.** A publishing of the banns of marriage, which is required by law in New England. "Mr. Doe and Miss Roe's *publisshment* took place to-day."

Any persons desiring to be joined in marriage, shall have such their intentions published . . . or posted up by the clerk of each town; and a certificate of such *publisshment* . . . shall be produced as aforesaid previous to their marriage. — *Statutes of Massachusetts*, 1786.

**PUCCOON.** An Indian name for various plants affording coloring matter.

1. The *Sanguinaria canadensis*, or Blood root. The juice was much used by the Indians as a dye or stain, as on the old basket ware now no longer to be seen.

They have the *puccoon*, with which the Indians used to paint themselves red; and



the shumach and sassafras, which make a deep yellow. — *Beverly's Virginia*, Book III.

2. Yellow puccoon. *Hydrastis canadensis*, or Yellow root.

**PUCKER.** A fright; a state of perplexity or trouble; agitation. Provincial in England.

It was natural enough that the Squire's wife should be in a *pucker* to see the Ladies' Book [which contained an article ridiculing her]. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 326.

**PUEBLO.** (Span.) A village of the semi-civilized Catholic Indians of New Mexico.

The villages of the christianized Indians in New Mexico were called *pueblos*, in opposition to the wild roving tribes that refused such favors. — *Wislizenus, New Mexico*.

**PUEBLO INDIAN.** A Catholic Indian villager of New Mexico.

The most interesting class of the inhabitants of New Mexico are those known as the *Pueblo Indians*. They are the descendants of the ancient rulers of the country, and are so called because they dwell in villages and subsist by agriculture, instead of living in lodges and depending upon the chase, as the wild Indians of the mountains and plains. — *Davis, El Gringo*, p. 114.

**PUKE.** 1. A mean, contemptible fellow.

2. A nickname for a native of Missouri.

**PULL-DOO.** A small black duck found in the bays and inlets of the Gulf of Mexico. They seldom fly, but rely upon swimming and diving to evade pursuit. The word is probably a corruption of *poule d'eau*, i. e. water-hen.

**PULL DICK, PULL DEVIL.** An expression used in low language synonymous with "neck and neck," denoting an equal contest in a race, etc.

**TO PULL FOOT.** To walk fast; to run.

I look'd up; it was another shower, by Gosh. I *pulls foot* for dear life. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

I thought I'd run round two or three streets. So I *pulled foot*, and hunted and sweat till I got so tired I could'nt but just stand. — *Maj. Downing's May-day in New York*.

**TO PULL IT.** To run.

And how a man one dismal night  
Shot her with silver bullet,  
And then she flew straight out of sight  
As fast as she could *pull it*.

*T. G. Fessenden, Yankee Doodle.*

**TO PULL UP,** among travellers, means to stop. Alluding to the act of pulling the reins of a horse in order to stop him.

**TO PULL UP STAKES.** To pack up one's furniture or baggage, preparatory to a removal; to remove. The allusion is to pulling up the stakes of a tent.

If this stranger is to receive countenance, then I'll *pull up stakes* and depart from Tinnecum for ever — *Knickerbocker Magazine*.

**TO PULL WOOL OVER THE EYES.**

The Tariff project for reducing the revenue is a humbug—a trick for *pulling wool over the eyes* of innocent people — *N. Y. Herald*.

That 'ere stranger's only playin' possum, but he can't *pull the wool over* this child's eyes; he's got 'em both skinned. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

**PUMA.** (*Felis concolor*.) An animal known also under the names of Cougar, Panther, and American Lion, the largest of the cat kind found in America. Flint describes it, under the name panther, as of the size of the largest dogs, of a dark grayish color, marked with black spots. It is in shape much like the domestic cat, with short legs, large paws, and long talons. It conceals itself among the branches of the trees, and thence darts upon its prey.

**PUMPKIN-SEED.** A variety of the *Perca Americana*, common in freshwater ponds and lakes. They are so called from their form. In the river St. Lawrence I have seen them from six to eight inches in length. In some places they are called Sun-fish.

**PUNCHEONS.** A term which, in Georgia, means split logs, with their faces a little smoothed with an axe or hatchet. These, being laid upon sleepers, make a *puncheon floor*.

The Squire's dwelling consisted of but one room. The house was constructed of logs, and the floor was of *puncheons*. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 12.

Bill knew him; and if the old serpent himself had popped up his head through the *puncheons* and claimed him for his brand, he could n't have been more scared — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*

**PUNG.** A rude sort of sleigh, or oblong box made of boards and placed on runners, used for drawing loads on snow by horses. — *Worcester*. Also called a *Jumper*, which see.

These were sledges or *pungs*, coarsely framed of split saplings, and surmounted with a large crockery-crate. — *Margaret*, p. 174.

**PUNK.** 1. Rotten wood; touchwood; spunk. A word in common use in New England, as well as in the other Northern States and Canada. Ash defines it "a kind of *fungus*, often used for tinder." — *Pickering*.

2. A punch or blow with the fist. New York.

**TO PUNK.** To push or strike with the fist; to punch. New York.

**PUNT.** In Maryland and Virginia, a small boat made of the body of a large tree. In England, a *punt* is a flat-bottomed boat.

**PUPELO.** A name for cider-brandy, formerly manufactured in New England to a great extent.

"Han't they got any of the religion at your house?" "No, marm, they drink *pupelo* and rum."—*Margaret*, p. 52.

**PUT.** *To stay put* is to keep still, remain in order. A vulgar expression.

The levees and wharves of the First Municipality won't "*stay put*." Last evening that part of the levee opposite Custom-House street, which had caved in and was since filled, sunk suddenly ten feet. — *N. O. Picayune*.

**TO PUT.** To start; go; decamp; be off. "I see I'm not wanted here; so I'll *put*."

B—— found himself by mistake in the ladies' saloon; a fact he was politely informed of by one of the occupants, who said, "Guess you *put* for the wrong pow, mister." — *Notes on Canada, etc., Blackwood's Mag.*

**TO PUT OFF.** To start, set out. Originally a nautical term.

It is an astonishing fact that over fifteen thousand persons have deserted their homes in California, and *put off* by every means of conveyance for Fraser's river. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 22, 1858.

**TO PUT OUT.** To set out; to be off. A Western expression. *To put* is used in the same sense.

As my wife's father had considerable land on Blue Fox river, and as we wanted a little more elbow-room, I says one day to Nancy, "Nancy," says I, "Idad, 'spose we *put out* and live there." — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 172.

Well, I *put out* for the Planter's as fast as I could, where you know I found you at last. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 63.

There was goin' to be a raisin' or log-rollin' a good piece off, and the old man reckoned he'd better *put out* in the evening and stay at some of the neighbor's houses and be allowed to take an early start in mornin'. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

La Bonté picked up three mules for a mere song, and the next day *put out* for the Platte. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 66.

"The more you give the slaves," said Jekyl, "the more dissatisfied they grow, till finally they *put* for the free States."

"Very well," said Clayton; "if that's to be the result, they may *put* as soon as they can get ready." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 195.

**TO PUT THE LICKS IN.** To exert oneself.

You had better *put the licks in* and make haste, or there will be more fiddling and dancing and serving the devil this morning. — *Sam Shick, Human Nature*, p. 164.

**TO PUT IT IN STRONG.** To express oneself strongly or emphatically.

The missionaries in the South are pretty careful; they *put it in strong* in the catechism about the rights of the master. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 193.

**TO PUT THROUGH.** To carry through, effect, accomplish, a piece of busi-

ness. A term much used in speaking of legislative business ; thus, to carry a bill or resolution is “ *to put it through.*”

**PUTS.** When a speculator thinks that stocks are going down, and wishes to make a small operation without incurring much risk, he gives a small sum for the privilege of delivering a small amount of stock at a certain price. For instance, if the cash price of Erie was fifty-seven per cent., a speculator would give, say fifty dollars, to “put” or deliver one hundred shares at fifty-six and a half per cent. say next week, ten days, or any short time. He can only lose his fifty dollars, if the market should go up ; but if it goes down to fifty-six, he gets his money back, and all below that is so much profit. Operations of this kind are carried on principally among the curb-stone brokers, men who have strong speculative propensities and very little capital. — *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*, Vol. XXXVII.

**PUTTO.** (Fr. *poteau*, a post.) A stake firmly set in the ground, to which wild cattle and horses are secured. A term in general use in the grazing region of the South-west.

**PUTTY-ROOT.** (*Aplectrum hymenale*). Also called “Adam and Eve,” from the bulb of the preceding year being always connected with the new one.

**TO PUZZLE A PHILADELPHIA LAWYER** is considered a very difficult undertaking, the Philadelphia gentlemen of the profession being regarded as remarkably keen-witted.

Had General Taylor not confessed himself a whig, it would have puzzled a Philadelphia lawyer to have detected it. — *Southern Patriot*.

## Q.

**TO QUACKLE.** To interrupt in breathing ; to almost choke ; to suffocate. Provincial in England, and colloquial in America. — *Worcester*.

**QUADROON, or QUATERON.** The offspring of a mulatto woman by a white man.

**QUAHAUG.** In New England, the popular name of a species of clams having a round and very hard shell. See *Pooquaw*.

The laws of Rhode Island provide, that any person who shall take any *quahaugs* or clams from certain beds in Providence river between May and September, shall forfeit twenty dollars for each offence.

**QUAKER CITY.** The city of Philadelphia ; so called from its founders having been Friends or Quakers.

**QUAKER GUNS.** Wooden guns placed in the port-holes of merchant vessels.

We fancy our vessels of war which suffered the fillibuster Walker to escape were armed with *Quaker guns*. — *Providence Journal*.

**TO QUALIFY.** To swear to discharge the duties of an office; and hence to make oath of any fact; as, "I am ready to *qualify* to what I have asserted!"

Dr. Tato, of Virginia, the new Auditor of the Treasury for the Post-Office Department, this morning *qualified* and entered upon the duties of his office. — *The (Balt) Sun*, Oct. 1, 1857.

**QUARTER.** A twenty-five cent piece, which is a quarter of a dollar, is often called simply a *quarter*.

**QUARTERS.** The negro huts of a plantation are termed the *negro quarters*, or simply the *quarters*.

**QUEEN CITY.** Cincinnati.

**QUID.** A corruption of *cud*; as, in vulgar language, a *quid* of tobacco. In Kent (England), a cow is said to chew her *quid*; so that *cud* and *quid* are the same. — *Pegge's Anonymia*.

**QUILTING.** A piece of reed, on which weavers wind the thread which forms the woof of cloth, is called a *quill*; an old English word. In New England, a certain process of winding thread is called *quilling*.

The child, Margaret, sits in the door of her house, on a low stool, with a small wheel, winding spools, in our vernacular, *quilling*. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

**QUILTING-BEE, or QUILTING-FROLIC.** An assemblage of women who unite their labor to make a bed-quilt. They meet by invitation, seat themselves around the frame upon which the quilt is placed, and in a few hours complete it. Tea follows, and the evening is sometimes closed with dancing or other amusements.

Now [in the days of Gov Stuyvesant] were instituted *quilting-bees* and husking-bees, and other rural assemblages, where, under the inspiring influence of the fiddle, toil was enlivened by gaiety and followed up by the dance. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

## R.

**RACCOON.** (*Procyon lotor*.) A well-known carnivorous animal found in most parts of North America, valuable for its fur. Vulgarly called *Coon*, which see.

**TO RACE.** To cause to run, to chase. A vulgar use of the word.

Between five and six o'clock on Thursday afternoon, a well-known character named Michael Clark, while passing the corner of Cathedral and Franklin streets, espied an old enemy named Edward Gettier, perched on a scaffold swinging against the side of a new house, busy applying a painter's brush to the structure, and regardless of all things below. Both had been previously concerned, on opposite sides, in several street affairs; and Clark thinking it a good time to let him know he was about again, slipped up, and commenced shooting at Gettier with a revolver. After several shots had been wasted, one of the balls took effect in Gettier's side, wounding him slightly. Clark then ran, and Gettier, jumping down, *raced* him for some distance, etc — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Aug. 7, 1858.

**RADDLE.** In New England, an instrument consisting of a wooden bar, with a row of upright pegs set in it, which is employed by domestic weavers to keep the warp of a proper width, and prevent it from becoming entangled when it is wound upon the beam of a loom. — *Webster*. It is an English term.

**RAFT.** 1. A frame or float, made by laying pieces of timber across each other. — *Johnson*. In North America, *rafts* are constructed of immense size, and comprise timber, boards, staves, etc. They are floated down from the interior to the tide-waters, being propelled by the force of the current, assisted by large oars and sails, to their place of destination. The men employed on these rafts construct rude huts upon them, in which they often dwell for several weeks before arriving at the places where they are taken to pieces for shipping to foreign parts.

2. This term is also applied to a large collection of timber and fallen trees, which, floating down the great rivers of the West, are arrested in their downward course by flats or shallow places. Here they accumulate, and sometimes block up the river for miles. The great *raft* on Red river extended twenty miles, and required an immense outlay of money to remove it in order to make the river navigable.

3. A large number, a host. Vulgar.

We have killed Calhoun and Biddle; but there is a *raft* of fellows to put down yet. — *May*. *Downing's Letters*, p. 93.

We've shoals of shad, whole *rafts* of canvas-back ducks, and no end of terrapins. — *Burton*, *Waggoner's*.

Among its notices to correspondents, an exchange paper says: "a *raft* of original articles are on file for next week." We hope none of them will prove mere lumber. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The Elder's wife was a sick lookin' woman, with a whole *raft* o' young ones squalling round her. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 210.

**TO RAFT.** To transport on a raft. — *Webster*.

**RAFTING.** The business of constructing and floating rafts.

**RAFTSMAN.** A man who follows the business of rafting.

**RAG.** *To take the rag off the bush*, or simply *to take the rag off*, is to bear away the palm.

I had an everlastin' fast Narragansett pacer. I was considerable proud of him, I assure you; for he *took the rag off the bush* in great style. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 218.

"Don't be skeered," says I, "Gineral, don't be skeered; I ain't a goin' for to hurt you, but jist to salute you as my senior officer, for it tante often two such old heroes like you and me meet, I can tell you. You fit at Waterloo, and I fit at Bunker's Hill; you whipt the French, and we whipt the English. P'raps history can't show jist two such battles as them; they *take the rag off* quite. — *Sam Slick in England*, Chapter XXXVIII.

**RAIL.** A piece of timber, cleft, hewed, or sawed, inserted in upright posts for fencing. The common *rails* among farmers are rough, being used as they are split from the chestnut or other trees. — *Webster*.

**TO RAIL IT.** To travel by railroad.

From Petersburg I *railed it* through the North Carolina pitch, tar, turpentine, and lumber country, to the great American pitch, tar, turpentine, and lumber depot — Wilmington. The prospect is, from the car windows, continuously an immensity of pine, pine, nothing but pine-trees, broken here and there with openings of pine under-brush. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, May 22, 1848.

**RAIL-CAR.** A car for transporting passengers on railroads.

**RAILROAD.** This word is in universal use in the United States, while "railway" is more common in England. So we say *railroad* track, *railroad* depot, and *railroad* car, which in England would be called a railway, a railway station, and railway carriage.

**TO RAISE A RACKET.** To make a racket or noise.

I see it warn't no use *raisin' a racket*; so I concluded I'd have satisfaction out of him, and began shakin' my fist at him. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 36.

**TO RAISE CAIN.** To cause a disturbance; to make a row.

Now bring Mexico into the Union, and I'd like to know which of the great powers would undertake to dictate to her, or tell her what she must do. . . . There would'nt be any struttin' about, and talkin big, and threatenin' to *raise Cain*. — *Hammond, Lakes and Forest Scenes*.

**TO RAISE ONE'S HAIR.** In the semi-barbarous dialect used by the hunters, trappers, and others who traverse the great plains and prairies of the West, scalping a man is "*raising* (or *lifting*) *his hair*."

Kit Carson is the paragon of mountaineers: to look at him no one would think that the mild-looking being before him was an incarnate devil in an Indian fight, and had *raised* more *hair* from the red-skins than any two men in the Western country. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 194.

**RAISE.** *To make a raise* is a vulgar American phrase, meaning to make a haul, to raise the wind.

The chances were altogether favorable for *making a raise*, without fear of detection. — *Simon Suggs*, p. 48.

I *made a raise* of a horse and saw, after being a wood-piler's apprentice for a while. — *Neal, Sketches*.

**TO RAISE.** 1. To cause to grow; to procure to be produced, bred, or propagated: as to *raise* wheat, barley, hops, etc.; to *raise* horses, oxen, or sheep. — *Webster*.

To *raise* is applied in the Southern States to the breeding of negroes. It is also sometimes heard at the North among the illiterate; as, "I was *raised* in Connecticut," meaning brought up there. See more in *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

You know I was *raised*, as they say in Virginia, among the mountains of the North. — *Paulding, Letters from the South*, Vol. I. p. 85.

Old negro Bill, belonging to Mr. Sampson, Hunt Co., Virginia, was *raised* there and served in the American Revolution, a portion of the time as a servant to Washington. — (*Wash.*) *Ev. Star*, Jan. 7, 1857.

2. To obtain with difficulty or in a discreditable manner.

3. To make up, fabricate, invent; as, "That's a tale they've *raised* on me," meaning some ludicrous or disgraceful anecdote invented against a person. Western.

**TO RAISE A BEAD.** This expression is used at the West, and means to bring to a head, to make succeed. The figure is taken from brandy, rum, or other liquors, which will not "raise a bead," unless of the proper strength.

The result was, if the convention had been then held, the party would'nt have been able to *raise a bead*. — *Letter from Ohio, N. Y. Tribune*, 1846.

**RAISING-BEE, or RAISING.** In New England and the Northern States, the operation or work of setting up the frame of a building. — *Webster*.

On such occasions the neighboring farmers are accustomed to assemble and lend their assistance. In this way the framework of the largest house or barn is set up in a few hours.

*Raising-bees* were frequent, where houses sprang up at the wagging of the fiddle-stick, as the walls of Thebes sprang up of yore to the sound of the lyre of Amphion. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

The spectacle of a *raising*, though so common-place an affair elsewhere, is something worth seeing in the woods. — *Mrs Clavers's Forest Life*.

**RAKE DOWN.** A taking down, a scolding.

I have expected to be "blown up" in print, by "S———l," before now, but have so far escaped—much to the disappointment of the b'hoys about here. I would submit with a good grace to a "*rake down*," if I could only succeed in starting again his "gray goose quill." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.



**RANCHO, or RANCH.** (Span. *ranchó*.) A rude hut of posts, covered with branches or thatch, where herdsmen or farm-laborers live or only lodge at night.

**RANCHERIA.** (Span.) The place, site, or house in the country where a number of rancheros collect together. The collection of few or many huts or ranchos into a small village.

**RANCHERO.** (Span.) A person who lives in a rancho; and hence any peasant or countryman.

**RANGE.** 1. The public lands of the United States are surveyed or divided into *ranges*, which designate the order of their arrangement into townships. — *Bowyer's Law Dict.*

2. In Texas, the prairies on which the large herds of cattle graze and range are called cattle or stock *ranges*.

When any person may hunt estrays in another stock *range*, he shall notify the owner of said stock of his intention. — *Laws of Texas*.

The herdsman agrees to deliver a certain number of beeves, in marketable order. . . . The *range* is then scoured and the requisite number obtained. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 371.

**RANTERS.** A gang of Baltimore bullies.

**RAPIDS.** The part of a river where the current moves with more celerity than the common current. *Rapids* imply a considerable descent of the earth, but not sufficient to occasion a fall of the water, or what is called a cascade or cataract. — *Webster*.

**RAT.** A contemptuous term used among printers, to denote a man who works under price.

**TO RAT.** Among printers, to work under price.

**RAT OFFICE.** A printing office in which full prices are not paid.

**RATOONS.** 1. (Span. *retoño*.) Sugar cane of the second and third year's growth, of which cuttings are made for planting the succeeding year.

2. The heart-leaves in a tobacco-plant. — *Webster*.

**RATTLESNAKE.** (*Crotalus horridus*.) A genus of serpents, celebrated for the danger which accompanies their bite, and for the peculiar appendages to their tail. This venomous reptile, of which there are many species, is exclusively confined to America; but they have greatly diminished in the United States in proportion to the increase of population.

**TO REALIZE.** To feel or bring home to one's mind as a reality. In this sense it is not without English authority; as, "to *realize* one's position." (*Eccl. Rev.*) — *Worcester*.

Now to *realize* the idea of what a nebulous star must portend, etc. — *Nichol. Syst. of the World*, p. 45.

This allusion must have had enhanced strength and beauty to the eye of a nation extensively devoted to a pastoral life, and therefore *realizing* all its fine scenes and the tender emotions to which they gave birth. — *Dwight*.

**REAR HORSE.** The vulgar name, at the South, for the orthopterous insect called the Mantis, Camel Cricket, or Johnny Cock-horse.

**REBOSO.** (Span.) A scarf or long shawl universally worn over the head and shoulders by the women of the Spanish-American States and Territories.

**RECEIPTOR.** A person to whom goods levied on by the sheriff are delivered, on his undertaking to deliver the same to the sheriff on demand, or to pay the amount on execution. — *Burrill's Law Dict.*

**TO RE-CHARTER.** To charter again; to grant a second or another charter to. — *Webster*.

**TO RECKON.** To think; to imagine; to believe; to conjecture; to conclude; to guess. Used in some parts of the United States as *calculate* is in New England and elsewhere. It is provincial in England in the same sense, and is noticed in the glossaries of Pegge and Brockett. Mr. Hamilton, in his remarks on the Yorkshire dialect, says: " 'I reckon' comes out on every occasion, as perhaps aliens would expect from this country of 'ready reckoners.' " — *Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 317.

"General, I guess we best say nothin' more about bribin'," says I. "Well," says he, "Major, I reckon you're right." — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 208.

I say! what do you guess about lending me your axe for a spell? Do you reckon you can spare it? — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 84.

I reckon you hardly ever was at a shooting-match, stranger, from the cut of your coat. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 198.

**TO RECOUPE.** (Fr. *recouper*.) To diminish a claim for damages by cutting off or keeping back a part.

This old word has been revived to a considerable extent in modern law. "Where a man brings an action for breach of a contract between him and the defendant, and the latter can show that some stipulation in the same contract was made by the plaintiff, which he has violated, the defendant may, if he choose, instead of suing in his turn, *recoupe* his damages, arising from the breach committed by the plaintiff, whether they be liquidated or not. The law will *cut off* so much of the plaintiff's claim as the cross-damages may come to." — *Cowen, in Wendell's Reports*, Vol. XXII. p. 156.

**RECOUPEMENT.** Defalcation or discounting from a demand. A keeping

back something which is due, because there is an equitable reason to withhold it. The principle of *recoupement* has been established in the State of New York in several cases of recent occurrence. — *Burrill's Law Dict.*

RED ADDER. See *Copperhead*.

RED-BUD. (*Cercis canadensis*.) A small ornamental tree, noted for its pink flowers, which at a distance resemble those of the peach-tree. It grows on rich soil from New York to Ohio, Kentucky, and southwards. Also called Judas-tree.

RED CENT. A common term for the copper cent.

When Gen. Washington had got through with his fightin', . . . government owed him hundreds of millions of dollars, and had n't the first *red cent* to pay with. — *Hammond's Lake and Forest Scenes*.

Every thing in New Orleans sells by dimes, bits, and picayunes; and as for copper money I have not seen the first *red cent*. — *Bayard Taylor in N. Y. Tribune*.

H—— must have a million of dollars, and a man with that is not poor in any country; certainly it was a great catch for Miss L——, without a *red cent* of her own — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 147.

RED DOG MONEY. A term applied, in the State of New York, to certain bank-notes which have on their back a large red stamp.

The late General Banking-law of the State of New York, which was applied to all new banks, as well as to those the charters of which were renewed, obliged the parties or individuals associated to deposit securities with the comptroller, and receive from him blank notes of various denominations, signed or bearing the certificate of the comptroller or officer authorized by him. These notes bore a *red stamp* on their backs.

The free admission under this law of securities of a very questionable character induced many persons, both individually and collectively, to organize banks of issue; and, as a natural consequence, a considerable portion of the circulating medium soon consisted of the notes of the free banks, bearing the red stamp. The community, generally, did not consider these notes as safe as those issued by the old banks, and stigmatized them as *red dogs*, and the currency as *red dog money*. The character of the securities, however, has since been improved by an act which demands that only certain stocks of well-established reputation shall be admitted; and consequently the odium which existed against the first banks created under the law is now done away with. In Michigan they apply the term *blue pup money* to bank-notes having a blue stamp on their backs.

Much bogus coin and wild-cat, *red dog bills* are in circulation; but, as a general principle, shin-plasters are regarded cautiously, and nothing is given for nothing. — *North, Slave of the Lamp*, p. 38.

Shakspeare makes one of his characters say :

"How sweet the moonshine sleeps upon this bank."

But in this "*red dog*" and "wild-cat" era, the reading about banks and moonshine should be modernized thus :

"How sweet these banks do sleep upon this moonshine."

*La Salle Press.*

**RED-EYE.** Fiery new whiskey.

I promised the overseer a new covering and a demyjohn of *red-eye* if all went straight, got my little fixins together, and off I set. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

**RED HORSES.** A nickname applied to the natives of Kentucky.

**RED MEN.** The American Indians, so called from their color.

Since the *red men* have become known to us, numerous tribes have been extinguished, with all their peculiar customs and institutions ; yet, as a whole, the Indian remains. — *Lapham's Antiqs. of Wisconsin*, p. 30.

Children, you ask why the *red men* keep moving towards the setting sun, and why the pale faces follow ? You ask if the place where the sun sets will ever be reached, and if pale men will go there to plough and build. — *Cooper, The Red Skins*, p. 321.

The *red man*, too,

Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,  
And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought  
A wilder hunting-ground. — *Bryant, The Prairies.*

The *red man* smoked his pipe, or trimmed the fire,  
And many a tale he to our father told

Of barbarous battle and of slaughter dire,  
That on Pawtucket's marge these chanced of old.

*Durfee, What Cheer*, Canto iii.

**RED RACE.** The American Indians.

We need not look to Mexico or any other country for the descendants of the mound-builders. We probably see them in the present *red race* of the same or adjacent regions. — *Lapham's Antiqs. of Wisconsin*, p. 29.

**RED-ROOT.** A shrub found upon the prairies near the Rocky Mountains, highly esteemed as a substitute for tea. It resembles the tea of commerce, and affords an excellent beverage. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 26.

**RED-SKIN.** An American Indian.

What may be right and proper in a *red-skin* may be sinful in a man who has not even a cross in blood to plead for his ignorance. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans.*

**RED VIPER.** See *Copperhead*.

**TO REDEEM.** To pay the value in specie of any promissory note, bill, or other evidence of debt given by the State, by a company or corporation, or by an individual. The credit of a State, a banking company, or individual, is good when they can *redeem* all their stock, notes, or bills at par.

— *Webster*. This sense of the word is peculiar to us, and is not noticed by any English lexicographer. In England they *cash* notes, bank-bills, etc.

**REDEMPTIONER.** This name is given in the Southern States to those Germans, Irish, and other Europeans who emigrate from their own country to the United States, and sell their services for a term of time to pay their passage-money and other expenses. — *Pickering*.

**REED-BIRD.** See *Bobolink*.

**REFECTORY.** An eating-house, restaurant. This word originally denoted an apartment in convents and monasteries where a moderate repast was taken; and at Oxford, England, is applied to the place where the members of each College or Hall dine.

**REFEREE.** A person to whom a cause pending in a court is referred by the court, to take testimony, hear the parties, and report thereon to the court; and upon whose report, if confirmed, judgment is entered. — *Burrill's Law Dict.* A referee differs from an arbitrator, the latter being chosen by parties to decide a cause between them.

**REFORM SCHOOL.** A school for the confinement, instruction, and reformation of juvenile offenders, and of young persons of idle, vicious, and vagrant habits.

**REGALIA.** The banners, aprons, badges, and other decorations used by the Society of Odd Fellows. It is singular that this term, which signifies the trappings of royalty, should have been chosen by this large and respectable body for their simple decorations.

**REGENT.** In the State of New York, the member of a corporate body which is invested with the superintendence of all the colleges, academies, and schools in the State. This board consists of twenty-one members, who are called "the *regents* of the University of the State of New York." They are appointed and removable by the legislature. They have power to grant acts of incorporation for colleges; to visit and inspect all colleges, academies, and schools; and to make regulations for governing the same. — *Statutes of New York*.

**REGRET.** A note declining an invitation, and containing an expression of regret for the same; as, "I can't go to Mrs. Jones's ball next Wednesday, but must send a *regret*." A new lady's term.

**REGULAR WAY.** Very often in the report of stock sales the letters *R. W.* are attached to certain operations. This "regular way" means the delivery of the stock sold the next day. All sales for cash are for immediate delivery. — *Hunt's Merch. Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII.

**REHASH.** A cooking over again ; a renewal or repetition in another form. Doubtless of English origin, though not in the dictionaries.

Gov. Tallmadge, in speaking of Senator Shields's promise to present the memorial of the "Spiritualists" to the Senate, and his treatment of it afterwards, says :

I confess my surprise, that, instead of moving for an investigation by a select committee, he should have given in advance a *rehash* of what has been so often said before by the opponents of spiritualism. — *Healing of Nations, Appendix*, p. 468.

**TO REINSURE.** To insure the same property a second time by other underwriters. — *Webster*.

It is common with underwriters or insurance companies, when they find they have too large a sum insured on one ship, or in a particular district, to *reinsure* a part elsewhere.

The insurer may cause the property insured to be *reinsured* by other persons. — *Walsh, French Com. Code*.

**TO REINVESTIGATE.** To investigate again. — *Webster*.

**REINVESTIGATION.** A repeated investigation. — *Worcester*.

**TO RELAND.** To go on shore after having embarked. — *Webster*.

**RELIGION.** *To get religion* is a technical term among certain sects, meaning to be converted.

**TO RELOAN.** To loan again ; to lend what has been lent and repaid. — *Webster*.

**TO REMIND,** for *remember* ; as, "the company will please *remind*." A New York vulgarity.

**REMOVABILITY.** The capacity of being removed from an office or station ; capacity of being displaced. — *Webster*.

**RENCH.** A vulgar pronunciation of the word *rinse*.

**RENEWEDLY.** Anew ; again ; once more. A word often used by American preachers, but not supported by good English use. — *Worcester*.

**RENDITION,** for *rendering*. A new use of the word.

The Baltimore Sun of August 17, 1858, after recording the acquittal of a man tried for murder, says :

On the *rendition* of the verdict, the large audience present manifested enthusiastic approbation.

At half past 7 o'clock this evening two gentlemen are announced to deliver addresses to the public on behalf of the "Bible Union" organization, which has for its purpose the closest possible *rendition* of the meaning of the original text of the Scriptures into English and other modern tongues. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Nov. 11, 1858.

**TO REOPEN.** To open again. — *Webster*. This word is much used. The theatre *reopens* for the season; the schools *reopen* after their vacations.

**REORGANIZATION.** The act of organizing anew; as, "repeated *reorganization* of the troops." — *Webster*.

**REPETITIOUS.** Repeating; containing repetition. — *Webster*.

Mr. Pickering notices this word, which he thinks is peculiar to the writer from whom the following extract is taken:

The observation which you have quoted from the Abbé Raynal, which has been written off in a succession not much less *repetitious* or protracted than that in which schoolboys of former times wrote. — *Remarks on the Review of Inchiquin's Letters*, Boston, 1815.

Mr. Worcester, however, cites the North American Review and R. Anderson as authorities for its use.

**REPUBLICANS.** A party name which has been several times adopted in the history of American politics. It is now held by a party formally organized in the year 1856, the main "plank" of whose "platform" is, opposition to the extension of slavery to new territories. On account of their supposed fondness for the negroes, they have been commonly styled by their opponents *Black Republicans*.

The *Republican* party, as our readers are well aware, was called into being solely to resist the encroachments of slavery upon the free territory of the Union and upon the free States. It was a combination of men of varying political antecedents; some had been Whigs, some Democrats, some Americans, some Abolitionists, some had always kept aloof from politics. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 9, 1858.

**REQUISITION.** A demand of the executive of one county or State upon another for a fugitive from justice.

Under the old confederation of the American States, Congress often made *requisitions* on the States for money to supply the treasury; but they had no power to enforce the *requisitions*, and the States neglected or partially complied with them. — *Alex. Hamilton*.

**TO RESHIP.** To ship again; to ship what has been conveyed by water or imported. — *Webster*.

Much used in all our commercial cities.

**RESIDENT GRADUATE.** Graduates of colleges who are desirous of pursuing their studies at a college, without joining any of its departments. They may attend the public lectures given in the institution, and enjoy the use of its library.

**RESERVATION.** A tract of the public land reserved or set aside for some public use, as for schools, the Indians, etc. In Canada are the "Clergy Reserves" for the support of the clergy.

*Reservations* of land thirty miles square shall be surveyed on the frontier for the friendly Indians. — *Laws of Texas*.

**RESOLVE.** Legal or official determination; legislative act concerning a private person or corporation, or concerning some private business. Public acts of a legislature respect the State; and to give them validity, the bills for such acts must pass through all the legislative forms. *Resolves* are usually private acts, and are often passed with less formality. — *Webster.*

**RESTITUTIONISTS.** A religious sect which has recently sprung up in Worcester and some other places. The following account is given of it by the "Worcester Transcript:"

The *Restitutionists* believe that what man lost in the fall is now beginning to be restored; and that the germ, now confined to their own small number, is yet to bud and flourish till it covers the earth. They are all *Restitutionists* in one sense — they believe that every thing is to come back to its original form and purity. Their Sabbath, therefore, occurs on Saturday, as the original day of worship; and their meetings are held Friday evening, because it is Sunday eve. They only use the Lord's prayer, as that alone can have efficacy with the Father. To them — or three of them at least — is committed the apostolic gift of tongues. This gift appears to be rather useless, as the words spoken are not only unintelligible to bystanders, but to the others who have a like gift, till the inward manifestation of the spirit makes it known. They are God's chosen and willing instruments, in whom the Holy Spirit now develops himself partially, but through whose instrumentality the world is soon to be entirely restored.

This sect, small in numbers, is strong in the faith and working activity of its members. There are others of a like faith in Athol, New Brain-tree, Springfield, and other places.

**RESULT.** The decision or determination of a council or deliberative assembly; as, "the *result* of an ecclesiastical council." Peculiar to New England. — *Webster.*

**TO RESULT.** To decide or decree, as an ecclesiastical council. — *Pickering.*

According to Dr. Milner, the Council of Nice *resulted*, in opposition to the views of Arius, that the Son was peculiarly of the Father, etc. — *Bible News, Rev. N. Worcester.*

**TO RESURRECT.** To reanimate, to restore to life, to bring to public view that which was forgotten or lost.

In a note at the end of the 6th vol. of Mr. Benton's "Abridgment of the Debates of Congress," in speaking of the founders of the government, "who are all gone — their bodies buried in the earth, their works buried under rubbish, and their names beginning to fade away," the author adds:



I *resurrect* the whole ! put them in scene again on the living stage, every one with the best of his works in his hand.

**RETIRACIED.** Retired. New England.

The new-comer who lands in certain towns in New England, expecting to find himself among the most verdant country Yankees, is compelled to admit that there are no places in the world similarly *retiracied* which are less provincial or more agreeable. — *Mace Spicer, in Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**RETIRACY.** 1. Retirement. This absurd word is often applied to the condition of politicians who have retired, willingly or unwillingly, to private life.

Here I shall stay and amuse myself in what one of our great men used to call dignified *retiracy* — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 286.

2. Sufficiency; competency. It is said, in New England, of a person who left off business with a fortune, that he has a *retiracy*; i. e. a sufficient fortune to retire upon.

**TO RETIRE.** To withdraw; to take away; to make to retire. — *Johnson*. This transitive use of the verb, which had become obsolete, is now reviving in this country. Of the many examples from good old writers given by Johnson, we will quote only one from Shakspeare:

He, our hope, might have *retired* his power,  
And driven into despair an enemy's hate. — *Richard II.*

With us it is used by military men of withdrawing troops.

General Rosas insisted on the blockade being removed before he *retired* his troops from the Banda Oriental. — *Newspaper*.

And by merchants of paying their notes.

The French houses are *retiring* their notes, due next month, in advance, anticipating commercial difficulties. — *Newspaper*.

**RETORTIVE.** Containing retort. — *Webster*.

**TO RETROSPECT.** To look back.

To give a correct idea of the circumstances which have gradually produced this conviction, it may be useful to *retrospect* to an early period. — *Letter from Alex. Hamilton to John Adams*.

The word is rare in American writings; and from Mr. Pickering's observations, it appears that, although it has been used in England, it has not found favor there.

**TO REVAMP.** To patch up, renew. Originally a shoemaker's term.

**REVENUE CUTTER.** A small and swift armed vessel stationed at a seaport to protect the revenue by overhauling smugglers.

REVERENT. Strong; as, "*reverent* whiskey," i. e. not diluted.—*Sherwood's Georgia*.

REVOLVER. It is time that this word, applied to a revolving pistol, should have a place in the dictionary. In the first invention, the barrel, which contained several tubes, was made to revolve. In the present, and most approved form, the breech, which contains the charge, alone revolves. On the Western frontier of the United States, and in California, where they are most used, these arms are universally called "five shooters," or "six shooters," according to the number of charges they can receive.

RHODY. A diminutive often applied to the State of Rhode Island from its limited territory. Sometimes it is called "*Little Rhody*."

Old Newport, billow-cradled, see,  
On *Rhody's* verdant shore;  
'Tis there old Ocean shakes his mane,  
Resounding evermore.—*Anonymous*.

RICE-BIRD. See *Bobolink*.

RICH. Luscious; i. e. entertaining, highly amusing.

Mr. Richardson is *rich* on rabbits; and divides them into four races.—*London Athenæum*, Dec 1847.

Thar we was, settin' on our horses, rollin' with laughin' and liquor, and thought the thing was *rich* [alluding to a dog-fight] — *Porter's Southwestern Tales*, p. 57.

About as *rich* an instance of official idleness, self-conceit, and incivility, as we have seen, fell under our notice yesterday.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

RICHWOOD. (*Pilea pumila*.) A stingless nettle, so called from its succulent and semi-transparent stem. It is also called Clearweed.

TO RIDE. 1. The use of the word *ride*, both as a verb and a noun, in the sense of *being conveyed in a carriage*, has been regarded as an Americanism. Nevertheless, it has been good English for centuries, and, as Mr. Worcester observes, is sanctioned by the most eminent English lexicographers.

He made him to *ride* in the chariot.—*Gen.* 42 : 43.

English writers of the present day, however, consider it as correct to use it only of *conveyance on horseback*, or some other motive power, as in the following extract from Cowper: "Sometimes I get into a neighbor's chaise, but generally *ride* [i. e. on horseback];" but of conveyance in a carriage, they use the verb *drive*.

2. To carry, transport. In the city of New York this word is used of carting or carrying merchandise on a cart. Thus, to *ride* a box or bale of goods is to carry it. I heard a witness in a court-room testify that he

had “*rode* some hogs from the wharf to the store,” by which he meant that he had carried a load of dead hogs on his cart.

**TO RIDE AND TIE.** Said of two persons travelling on the same horse, one of whom rides ahead, and at a suitable place ties the horse for his companion; he walks on and his companion rides and ties; and so they continue to do by turns. Maryland and Virginia.

**RIDING ROCK.** A conspicuous rock at a ford, used to show the depth of the water and the safety of crossings. A stream is said to be “out of ride” when it is past fording; “out of bank,” is a still higher stage of the water, i. e. over its banks. Maryland and Virginia.

**TO RIGHTS.** Directly; soon. — *Webster*.

If folks will do what I tell 'em, things will go straight enough to *rights*. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 5.

So to *rights* the express got back, and brought a letter. — *Ibid.* p. 129.

*Aunt.* You see where she lives—five doors down the street; deliver this letter, and bring back an answer—quick

*Doolittle.* In a jiffing; I'll be back to *rights* — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

“Well, Mr. Nathaniel, I suppose you never heard me tell of the curious way of my first seeing the squire?”

I said I had never heard it—So she began to *rights*, and told the whole thing. — *Story of the Sleigh Ride*.

**RIGHT.** Very. The word in this sense is rarely heard at the North, but is in constant use at the South; as, “It rains *right* hard.” A New Yorker would say “very,” or “quite” hard.

**RIGHT AWAY.** Directly; immediately; right off.

Mr. Dickens, in his “American Notes,” relates the following anecdote, which occurred at the Tremont House, Boston:

“Dinner as quick as possible,” said I to the waiter.

“*Right away?*” said the waiter.

After a moment's hesitation, I answered, “No,” at hazard.

“Not *right away?*” cried the waiter with surprise.

I thought the waiter must have gone out of his mind, until another whispered to him “directly.”

“Well! and that's a fact!” said the waiter, “*Right away.*”

I now saw that “*right away*” and “directly” meant the same thing.

“Uncle John,” said Nina, “I want you to get the carriage out for me *right away*, I want to take a ride over the cross-run.” — *Mrs Stowe's Dred*, Vol. I. p. 89.

**RIGHT OFF.** Directly; immediately; used the same as the previous expression.

Mr. Webster thus writes to Mr. Edw. Curtis, appointing a meeting:

On the first of October, mutton and chickens would be good in New Hampshire.

Let us first meet in Boston, and then take a fair start together. If the Governor prefers Marshfield, we will go to that place and shut ourselves up in the office and do the work *right off*. — *Private Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 339.

I feel wonderfully concerned about that pain in your chest, said the Widow, to Mr. Crane. It ought to be attended to *right off*, Mr. Crane, *right off*. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

The Californians are eminently practical; what they mean to do, they do *right off* with all their might, as if they really meant to do it — *Borthwick, California*, p. 226.

**RIGHT SMART.** 1. Good sized; large.

The provisions were divided and served out, each man's ration consisting of a pint of mouldy corn and a *right smart* chunk of bacon. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 301.

2. A good deal. "Ma," says a child, "shall I toast *right smart* of this bread?" The mother replies, "I reckon." Southern.

I sold *right smart* of eggs this summer, and sweet potatoes always fetch a good price. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 157.

She had *right smart* of life in her, and was always right busy 'tending to something or other. — *Ibid.* Vol. I. p. 209.

It's a heap warmer to-day, and I'm sure we'll make *right smart* of corn. — *Southern Tales*.

**RIGHT SMART CHANCE.** See *Smart Chance*.

**TO RIGHT UP.** To put to rights, set in order.

**TO RILE.** This word, says Mr. Worcester, is provincial in England and colloquial in the United States. The original spelling and pronunciation, *roil*, is almost, if not entirely, obsolete in this country.

1. To render turbid by stirring up the sediment.

No doubt existed in the minds of Mr. Dobb's fellow-boarders, that the well of his good spirits had been *riled*. — *Neal's Coarcoal Sketches*.

2. To make angry. Provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*. In both countries it is now commonly pronounced and written *rile*.

John was a-dry, and soon cried out—

Goon git some beer we 'ool!

He'd so to wait, it made him *riled*,

The booths were all shock full.

*J. Noakes and Mary Styles.*

I won't say your country or my country, and then it won't *rile* nobody. — *Sam Slick in England*.

I tell you what, I was monstrous *riled* t'other day, when I got a letter from Crockett, calling me hard names and abusin' me. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

It *riled* me so that I just steps up to him, as savage as a meat-axe, intending to throw him down stairs. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 241.

We begin to think it's natur

To take sarse and not be *riled*: —

Who 'd expect to see a tater  
All on cend at bein' biled? — *The Biglow Papers*.

RILY. 1. Turbid. 2. Excited to resentment, vexed.

The boys and gals were laughin' at my scrape and the pickle I was in, that I gin to get riley. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 64.

TO RING ONE'S OWN BELL is the same as "to be one's own trumpeter."

RING-TAILED ROARER. See *Roarer*.

TO RIP. To tear, to drive. A common slang expression is "*Let her rip!*" i. e. let her drive, let her go.

Great Odin, thou storm-god!  
Clack on with our ship!  
We are off on a batter;  
Hurrah, *let her rip*. — *Leland, Knickerbocker Gallery*.

Another phrase, which often glides in music from the lip,  
Is one of fine significance and beauty, "*Let her rip*."  
In the late panic we have kept this mandate o'er and o'er,  
And "*let her rip*" so frequently, that some can *rip* no more.

*Park Benjamin, Poem on Hard Times*.

TO RIP OUT. To utter with vehemence, to swear; as "to *rip out* an oath."

I suppose the clergy would n't give me a chance for heaven, because I *rip out* with an oath every now and then. But I can't help swearing, if I should die for it. They say it's dreadfully wicked; but I feel more Christian when I let out, than when I keep in! — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 272.

Here I *ripped out* something, perhaps rather rash,  
Quite innocent, though; but, to use an expression  
More striking than classic, it settled my hash,  
And proved very soon the last of our session.

*Butler, Nothing to Wear*.

TO RIP-RAP. To make a foundation of stones thrown together without order in deep water.

If, in constructing a bulkhead, it should be determined to *rip-rap* to low-water mark, there would be but a slight difference in favor of the bulkhead; the cost for *rip-rapping*, estimating at three cents a foot, would be about eighty thousand dollars. — *Doc. of N. Y. Aldermen*, No. 9, 1848.

RIPPER. A tearer, driver. — *Webster*.

RIP-SNORTER, RIP-STAVER. A tearer, driver, dasher.

RISE. The phrase "*and the rise*" is used in some parts of the South to mean "and more;" as, "I should think there were a thousand *and the rise*," i. e. a thousand and more, over a thousand.

RIISING, or RISING OF. More than; upwards of; as, "James Smithson bequeathed to the United States *rising* half a million of dollars." "There were *rising of* a thousand men killed at the battle of Buena Vista."

**RISKY.** Dangerous ; hazardous.

My friends has wondered at me, said the Widow Bedott, for continuing single so long, but I always told them 't was a very *resky* business to take a second partner. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 144.

**RIVER.** Mr. Pickering observes that the Americans, in speaking of rivers, commonly put the name before the word *river*, thus, Connecticut *river*, Charles *river*, Merrimack *river*, Hudson *river*, Susquehanna *river* ; whereas the English place the name after it, and say, the *river* Thames, the *river* Danube, etc.

**RIVER-BOTTOMS.** The bottom or alluvial land along the margin of rivers. See *Bottom* and *Bottom Lands*.

The alluvial terraces or *river-bottoms*, as they are popularly termed, were the favorite sites of these builders [of the ancient works in Ohio]. The principal mounds are found where these *bottoms* are most extended. — *Squier and Davis's Monuments Mississippi Valley*, p. 6.

**RIVER-DRIVER.** A term applied by lumbermen in Maine, to a man whose business it is to conduct logs down running streams, to prevent them from lodging upon shoals or remaining in eddies.

**RIVER-THIEF.** One of a class of thieves in New York city who in boats prowl about vessels at night and plunder them.

**ROACH.** A cockroach.

**ROANOKE.** Indian shell money ; so called in Virginia. See *Peage*.

**ROARER.** One who roars ; a noisy man. — *Worcester*.

Ben was an old Mississippi *roarer* — none of your half and half, but just as native to the element, as if he had been born in a broad-horn. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 64.

This is sometimes intensified into *ring-tailed roarer*.

And when he got a arguing strong,

He was a *ring-tailed-roarer*. — *Western Song*.

**ROASTING-EARS.** Indian corn in the green state fit for roasting. This term is much used in the South and West for green corn in general, either raw or cooked. It is borrowed from the Indian custom of roasting the ears before a fire or in the hot ashes, which however is now practised only out of doors, as on pic-nic occasions. The common mode of cooking is by boiling.

The Indians delight much to feed on *roasting-ears*, gathered green and milky before it is grown to its full bigness, and roasted before the fire in the ear. — And indeed this is a very sweet and pleasing food. — *Beverley's Virginia*, 1705, Book III.

**ROBE.** (French.) A dressed skin ; applied only to that of the buffalo. A *pack of robes* is ten skins, tied in a pack, which is the manner in which they are brought from the far West to market. For the skins of other wild animals, we use the term *skin*, as *deer-skin*, *beaver-skin*,

muskra<sup>t</sup>-skin, etc., but never *buffalo-skin*. The term is sometimes corrupted into *buffalo-rug*.

The *robes* of the buffaloes are worn by the Indians instead of blankets—their skins, when tanned, are used as coverings for their lodges, etc. — *Catlin's Indians*, Vol. I. p. 262.

The large and roomy sleigh decked with buffalo, black bear, and lynx *robes*, red bound and furnished with sham eyes and ears. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 4.

**ROCK.** 1. A stone. In the Southern and Western States, and also in some parts of New England, stones of any size are absurdly called *rocks*.

Brother S—— came home in a mighty bad way, with a cold and cough; so I put a hot *rock* to his feet and gave him a bowl of catnip tea, which put him in a mighty fine sweat, etc. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 193.

Mr. M—— was almost dead with the consumption, and had to carry *rocks* in his pocket to keep the wind from blowin' him away. — *Maj. Jones's Travels*.

I see Arch. Cooney walk down to the creek bottom, and then he begun pickin' up *rocks* an' slingin' them at the dogs. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

2. A piece of money. A slang term peculiar to the South.

Spare my feelings, Squire, and don't ask me to tell any more. Here I am in town without a *rock* in my pocket, without a skirt to my coat, or crown to my hat. — *Puckings from the New Orleans Picayune*.

**To ROCK.** To throw stones at; to stone. This supremely ridiculous expression is derived from the preceding.

They commenced *rocking* the Clay Club House in June, on more occasions than one, and on one occasion threw a rock in at the window, hitting Mr. Clem on the shoulder, etc. — *Jonesborough (Tenn.) Whig*.

**ROCKAWAY.** A light carriage, open at the sides, and capable of holding from six to nine persons.

**ROCK-FISH.** See *Striped Bass*.

**ROCKER.** See *Cradle*.

**RODEO.** (Span.) To give or make a *rodeo* is to collect in an enclosure the large herds of cattle on stock farms, for the purpose of separating and counting and marking them. California.

\* Every owner of a stock farm shall be obliged to give yearly one general *rodeo*: . . . and the person giving such general *rodeo* shall give notice thereof to all owners of the adjoining farms, at least four days before said *rodeos* are made, for the purpose of separating, marking, and branding their respective cattle, etc. — *Laws of California*, chap. 92.

**ROKEAGE, or YOKEAGE.** Indian corn parched, pulverized, and mixed with sugar.

**ROLLING COUNTRY, or ROLLING PRAIRIE.** The vast plains or prairies of the West, although preserving a general level in respect to the whole country, are yet in themselves not flat, but exhibit a gracefully waving

surface, swelling and subsiding with an easy slope and a full rounded outline, equally avoiding the unmeaning horizontal surface and the interruption of abrupt or angular elevations. It is that surface which, in the expressive language of the country, is called rolling, and which has been said to resemble the long, heavy swell of the ocean, when its waves are subsiding to rest after the agitation of a storm. Such are *rolling prairies*. — *Judge Hall, Notes on the Western States*.

The country was what was termed *rolling*, from some fancied resemblance to the surface of the ocean when it is just undulating with a long ground swell. — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

Here one of the characteristic scenes of the Far West broke upon us. An immense extent of grassy, undulating, or as it is termed, *rolling country*, with here and there a clump of trees, dimly seen in the distance like a ship at sea; the landscape deriving sublimity from its vastness and simplicity. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*, p. 100.

The cabin was on the edge of a bluff; but the door opened on a fine *rolling prairie*, dotted all over with flowers, which, in variety of color, vied with the rainbow. — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 41.

**ROLLING-ROADS.** So called in Maryland and Virginia, from the old custom of rolling tobacco to market in hogsheads, just as if one would drag a barrel or churn on the ground, by attaching thills to axles or pivots fastened to it. This mode of transportation was still in use twenty years ago.

**TO ROOM.** To occupy a room; to lodge; as, "In order to save expense and have company, I *room* with my friend Brown," i. e. occupy the same room with him.

**ROOSTER.** The male of the domestic fowl; the cock.

As if the flourish of the quill were the crowing of a rooster. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

A huge turkey gobbling in the road, a rooster crowing on the fence, and ducks quacking in the ditches. — *Margaret*, p. 187.

The Skinners and Cow Boys of the Revolution, when they wrung the neck of a rooster, did not trouble their heads whether they crowed for Congress or King George. — *Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 17.

**TO ROPE.** To catch an animal, as a buffalo, a horse, etc., by throwing the lasso or lariat over its head.

Yep, old gal! (said he to his mule) keep your nose open; thar's brown skin about, and maybe you 'll get *roped* by a Rapaho afore mornin'. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*.

**TO ROPE IN.** 1. To take or sweep in collectively; an expression much used in colloquial language at the West. It originated in a common practice of drawing in hay with a rope. The hay is at first heaped in wind-rows. A rope, with a horse attached to each end, is swept like a



net around the end of the row, which is thus brought together, and dragged to any part of the field.

2. To decoy, viz., into a mock-auction establishment, a gambling-house, etc.

**ROPER IN.** One who acts as a decoy for a gambling-house, in the patent safe game, etc.

Mr. A.—complained to the police that a young man at his hotel, who turned out to be a *roper in* of a gambling house, had enticed him away, and by whose means he had lost all his money. — *Police Report, N. Y. Tribune.*

**ROBIN WEED.** (*Silphium laciniatum.*) A plant, called also the Compass Plant, because its leaves are supposed by the voyageurs to point north and south, and thus to serve as a guide to the traveller over the prairies.

**ROSS.** The rough, scaly matter on the surface of the bark of certain trees. — *Webster.* A term much used in New England, as well as in the Middle States. It is provincial in England.

**ROSTER.** 1. In Massachusetts, a list of the officers of a division, brigade, regiment, etc., containing, under several heads, their names, rank, corps, place of abode, etc. These are called division *rosters*, brigade *rosters*, regimental or battalion *rosters*.

2. The word is frequently used instead of Register, which comprehends a general list of all the officers of the State, from the commander-in-chief to the lowest in the commission, under the same appropriate heads, with an additional column for noting the alterations which take place. — *W. H. Sumner.*

**ROUGH AND TUMBLE.** A *rough and tumble* fight is said to be one in which all the laws of the ring are discarded, and biting, kicking, gouging, etc., are perfectly admissible.

**ROUGHSKINS.** A gang of Baltimore bullies.

**ROUGH-SCUFF.** The lowest people; the rabble.

**ROUND.** "To come or get *round* one," in popular language, is to gain advantage over one by flattery or deception. — *Webster.*

**ROUND OF THE PAPERS.** To say that an article is "going the *rounds of the papers*," meaning that it is being copied into many newspapers, is called an Americanism in England.

**ROUND-RIMMERS.** Hats with a round rim; hence, those who wear them. In the city of New York, a name applied to a large class of dissipated young men, by others called Bowery Boys and Soap-locks.

All over the region of East Bowery is spread — holding it in close subjection — the powerful class of *round rimmers*; a fraternity of gentlemen who, in round crape-

bound hats, metal-mounted blue coats, tallow-smoothed locks, etc., carry dismay and terror wherever they move. — *C. Mathews, Puffer Hopkins*, p. 261.

**USER.** Something very exciting or very great. Thus an eloquent speech or sermon, a large mass-meeting, or a big prize-ox, is a *rouser*.

**WDY.** A riotous, turbulent fellow.

All around the oyster and liquor stands was a throng of low, shabby, dirty men, some horse-dealers, some gamblers, and some loafers in general; but alike in their slang and *rowdy* aspect. — *Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 239.

The rowdy nomenclature of the principal cities may now be classified as follows:

NEW YORK. — "Dead Rabbits," "Bowery Boys," "Forty Thieves," "Skinners," "Robin Hood Club," "Huge Paws," "Short Boys," "Swall Boys," "Shoulder-hitters," "Killers."

PHILADELPHIA. — "Killers," "Schuylkill Annihilators," "Moyamensing Hounds," "Northern Liberty Skivers," and "Peep-of-Day Boys."

BALTIMORE. — "Plug Uglies," "Rough Skins," "Double Pumps," "Tigers," "Black Snakes," "Stay Lates," "Hard Times," "Little Fellows," "Blood Tubs," "Dips," "Ranters," "Rip-Raps," and "Gladiators."

A convention of the Baltimore rowdies above mentioned, under the name of the "American Clubs," was held in that city in Sept., 1857, under the plea of rallying for some political campaign; in commenting on which, the "Baltimore Clipper" of Sept. 8 says: "Should not every true-hearted American blush to acknowledge that any portion of his countrymen glory in such barbaric and degrading names?"

**TO ROW UP.** To punish with words; to rebuke. It is an essential Westernism, and derived from the practice of making refractory slaves or servants *row up* the heavy keel-boats of early navigation on the Western rivers, against the current, without being frequently relieved. It was thus regarded as a punishment.

We should really like, of all things, to *row up* the majority of Congress as it deserves in regard to the practice. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 10, 1845.

The most spicy part of the proceedings in the Senate was the *rowing up* which Mr. Hannegan gave Mr. Ritchie of the Union newspaper. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 30, 1846.

**TO ROW UP SALT RIVER** is a common phrase, used generally to signify political defeat. The distance to which a party is *rowed up Salt river* depends entirely upon the magnitude of the majority against its candidates. If the defeat is particularly overwhelming, the unsuccessful party is *rowed up to the very head waters of Salt river*.

It is occasionally used as nearly synonymous with *to row up*, as in the following example, but this example is rare:

Judge Clayton made a speech that fairly made the tumblers hop. He *rowed* the Tories *up and over Salt river*. — *Crockett, Tour Down East*, p. 46.

*To row up Salt river* has its origin in the fact that there is a small

stream of that name in Kentucky, the passage of which is made difficult and laborious, as well by its tortuous course as by the abundance of shallows and bars. The real application of the phrase is to the unhappy wight who has the task of propelling the boat up the stream; but in political or slang usage it is to those who are *rowed up* — the passengers, not the oarsman. — [*J. Inman.*]

**ROW TO HOE.** To have a *long* (or *hard*) *row to hoe*, is a common figurative expression, meaning that one has a long or difficult task to perform. The allusion is to hoeing corn or potatoes.

Hosea Bigelow has a ballad on the Mexican war, in which he portrays the efforts of the recruiting officer to entice a young man to enlist, who declines on account of his wife. He says:

She wants me for home consumption,  
Let alone the hay's to mow, —  
If you 're arter folks o' gumption,  
You 've a darned *long row to hoe*.  
*Biglow Papers.*

**TO RUB OUT.** To obliterate; and figuratively, to destroy, to kill. Western.

However quickly the buffalo disappears, the red man goes under more quickly still, and the Great Spirit has ordained that both shall be *rubbed out* from the face of nature at the same time. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 117.

That nation [the Comanche] is mad — a heap mad with the whites, and has dug up the hatchet to *rub out* all who enter his country. — *Ibid.* p. 191.

The swift current [of the Jordan] would seize us and send us off at a salient angle from our course, as if it had been lurking behind the point like an evil thing . . . as if for the purpose of *rubbing us out*. — *Lynch, Dead Sea Exp.*, p. 216.

**RUBBER.** India rubber, caoutchouc.

**RUBBERS.** Overshoes made of India rubber.

**RUFFED GROUSE.** (*Tetrus umbellus*.) A bird which extends over the whole breadth of the continent, northward as far as the fifty-sixth parallel, and southward to Texas, and probably still further. It is called Partridge in Connecticut, and Pheasant at the South and West.

**RUGGED.** Hardy; robust; healthy. Colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

Why it's an unaccountable fact that Mr. Bedott had n't seen a well day in fifteen year, though when he was married I should n't desire to see a *rugged* man than he was. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 22.

**RUINATIOUS.** A vulgar substitute for *ruinous*.

The war was very *ruinatious* to our profession (said the barber). — *Margaret*, p. 210.

**RULLICHES.** (Dutch, *rolletje*, little roll.) Chopped meat stuffed into small

bags of tripe, which are then cut into slices and fried. An old and favorite dish among the descendants of the Dutch in New York.

**RUM-BUD.** A grog blossom; the popular name of a redness occasioned by the detestable practice of excessive drinking. *Rum-buds* usually appear first on the nose, and gradually extend over the face. This term seems to have reference to the disease technically defined to be unsuppurative papule, stationary, confluent, red, mottled with purple, chiefly affecting the face, sometimes produced and always aggravated by the use of alcoholic liquors, by exposure to heat, etc. — *Rush*.

**RUM-HOLE.** See *Groggery*.

**RUM-SUCKER.** An habitual drinker, a toper.

One of the best things that can be applied to a rocky pasture infested with bushes, briars, or weeds, is salt. Salt them every week while wet with rain or dew, and let the stock look to that source alone for a supply of this luxury, which they run after with an acquired appetite as strong as that of a *rum-sucker*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 9, 1858.

**RUN.** A small stream, or rivulet. A word common in the Southern and Western States, and sometimes heard at the North.

There is no house in the main road between this and the *run*; and the *run* is so high, from the freshes, that you will not be able to find it. — *Davis's Travels in the United States in 1797*.

The hills bordering the Ohio, at the mouth of the Yellow Creek, contain six workable beds of coal, while there are at least two others which lie beneath the bed of the river. Of those exposed, the fourth in the ascending series contains the fishes and reptiles; it is known on Yellow Creek as the "big run," being nearly eight feet in thickness. — *Silliman's Journal*, March, 1858.

**TO RUN, or RUN UPON.** To quiz, to make a butt of.

He is a quiet, good-natured, inoffensive sort of a chap, and will stand *running upon* as long as most men, but who is a perfect tiger when his passions are roused. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 137.

**TO RUN ONE'S FACE.** To make use of one's credit. *To run one's face* for a thing is to get it on tick.

Any man who can *run his face* for a card of pens, a quire of paper, and a pair of scissors, may set up for an editor; and by loud, incessant bragging, may secure a considerable patronage. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**TO RUN INTO THE GROUND.** To carry to excess, to overdo a thing, and thereby mar it. Probably a hunter's phrase, to express the earthing of a fox or other game.

The proposition to prohibit the enlistment of foreigners in the army is *running Know Nothingism into the ground*. — *Providence Journal*.

The advocates of temperance have *run it into the ground* by their extreme measures connected with the Maine Law. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**RUN OF STONES.** A pair of mill-stones is called a *run of stones* when in

operation or placed in a mill. The Rochester flouring mills have each ten or twenty *run of stones*.

**RUNNER.** A person whose business it is to solicit passengers for steamboats and railroads. Numbers of these men are always found about the wharves, shipping, railroad stations, and hotels of our principal cities, trying to induce travellers or emigrants to travel by the routes they recommend, and for which they often have tickets for sale.

**RUSH.** Spirit, energy. "To go it *with a rush*, or *with a perfect rush*," is to do a thing energetically, with spirit.

**TO RUSH IT.** To do a thing with spirit; as, "The old negro is *pushing it* with his fiddle."

**RUSTY DAB.** (Genus, *Platessa*. Cuvier.) The popular name of the Rusty Flat-fish, a fish found on the coast of Massachusetts and New York in deep water.

S.

**SABBADAY.** Sabbath day, Sunday. So called in the interior of New England.

*Newman.* You look better; I hope you feel better, and are better?

*Doolittle.* Why, I expect I do, and I guess I be, all three. I know I be, as to the first particular, changing my old shabby duds for these new *Sabbaday* clothes, for a go-to-meeting day, anywheres. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*, p. 29.

My hearers, there is nothing irregular in nature; because it is round, as I told you last *Sabbaday*: it rolls evenly round, and is bound to come regularly around. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 194.

**SACATRA.** The name given in Louisiana to the offspring of a griffe and a negress.

**SACHEM.** (Abenaki Ind.) An American Indian chief or prince.

The *Sachems*, although they have an absolute monarchy over the people, yet they will not conclude of aught that concerns all, either laws, or subsidies, or wars, unto which the people are averse, and by gentle persuasion cannot be brought. — *R. Williams, Key to the Indian Language*.

**SACHEMDOM, or SACHEMSHIP.** The government or jurisdiction of a sachem.

King Philip's war was attended with exciting an universal rising of the Indian tribes, not only of Narragansett and the *Sachemdom* of Philip, but of the Indians through New England, except the *Sachemdom* of Uncas, at Mohegan. — *Stile's History of the Judges of Charles I.* p. 109.

**TO SADDY.** To bob up and down; to curtsy like a child. Probably a child's corruption of *Thank ye*, applied to the curtsy which accompanies the phrase.

It would do you good to see our boys and girls dancing. None of your straddling, mincing, *sadying*; but a regular sifter, cut-the-buckle, chicken-flutter set-to. — *Crockett, Tour.*

**SAFE.** 1. Sure, certain; as, "He's *safe* to be hanged." — *Brockett.* In this sense the word is common in the South-west.

2. An iron box, frequently built into the wall, and used by merchants as a place of deposit for their books and papers. They are now generally made fire-proof; and some of these are called "*salamander safes.*"

**SAFETY BARGE.** A passenger boat towed by a steamboat at such a distance from it as to avoid all apprehension of danger to the passengers. These barges were first introduced on the Hudson River by Mr. Wm. C. Redfield, to ply between New York and Albany; and, being fitted up with taste and luxury, they became great favorites with travellers. But our countrymen never hold their fears long; a short interval of exemption from steamboat accidents ended the excitement, while the greater speed of the ordinary boats gradually drew off passengers from the barges, until they could be no longer run with profit, and were abandoned. — *Silliman's Journal*, Nov. 1857.

**SAGABAN.** The root of the *Apios tuberoso*, used as food by the Indians of the North-west.

**SAGAMORE.** (Abenaki Ind.) The title of a chief or a ruler among some of the American tribes of Indians; a sachem. — *Worcester.*

The Indians of every noated place so combined, make a kind of petty lordship, and are commonly united under one chief person, who hath the rule over all those lesser fraternities or companies. In the places more eastward they called the chief rulers that commanded the rest, Bashabeas; as in the more westward plantations they called them *Sagamores* and sachems. — *Hubbard's Gen. Hist. of New England.*

But will not Waban pass Namasket near

Where oft that wise and good old *Sagamore*,

Brave Massasoit, spends the season drear? — *Durfee, Whatcheer*, Canto II.

If the young *Sagamore* is to be led to the stake, the Indians shall see how a man without a cross can die! — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*, p. 394.

**SAG-NICHTS.** The German rendering of the political term *Know-nothing*, it being made on the principle that those who *know* nothing had better *say* nothing.

**SAINTS.** "The *Saints*," is a title which the Mormons often apply to themselves on ordinary occasions, their full designation being "the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints." Whence they are also often called Latter-day Saints.

But the most fruitful element of internal commotion, and that which more immediately led to the prophet's death, was the institution of polygamy as one of the numerous privileges of the *Saints*. — *Ferris, Utah and the Mormons*, p. 113.

**SAKES.** "La *sakes*!" "massy *sakes*!" "*sakes* alive!" are very common exclamations among the venerable matrons of the interior parts of the country. The first two expressions are evidently corruptions of "for the Lord's sake!" "for mercy's sake!" But the last must be left for the old ladies themselves to parse.

La *sakes*! how poor she is! you can a'most see her bones come through her skin. just see her shoulder-blades; well if that ain't a sight! — *Cousin Cicely, Silver Lake Sketches.*

Why, *sakes alive*! do tell me if Enos is as mean as all that comes to. — *Nutmegville Revisited, N. Y. Com. Adv.*

**SALAD.** In the Northern States often used specifically for *lettuce*, of which salad is frequently made. The Philadelphia Ledger, in an article on Fraser river, speaking of the climate, says:

Fruit-trees blossom early in April, and *salad* goes to head by the middle of May, on Vancouver's Island. — July, 1838.

**SALAMANDER.** In Florida and Georgia a name applied to a species of pouched rat (*Geomys pinetis*), and also to the *Menopoma Alleghaniensis*; an animal of disgusting appearance, with a broad, flattened head, allied to the salamander proper. It is found in the Ohio and some of the Southern rivers.

**SALAMANDER SAFE.** See *Safe*.

**SALERATUS.** The prepared carbonate of soda and salt, used to an injurious extent in the United States by bakers and housekeepers for mixing with flour, to evolve the carbonic acid gas on the addition of water, in order to expand the dough and render the bread light.

**SALLY LUN.** A name for a sort of tea-cake.

**SALUTATORIAN.** The student of a college who pronounces the salutatory oration at the annual Commencement. — *Webster*.

**SALUTATORY.** An epithet applied to the oration which introduces the exercises of the Commencements in American colleges. — *Webster*.

**SALT-BOTTOM.** A plain or flat piece of land covered with saline efflorescences. These places abound in Western Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.

**SALT-LICK.** See *Lick*.

**SALT GRASS and SALT HAY.** The grass and hay growing in salt marshes.

**SALT PRAIRIE.** In Texas and New Mexico, the tracts of salt efflorescence which often cover a wide space. Capt. Reid speaks of some fifty miles in length and breadth. — *The Bay Hunters*.

**SALT-WATER VEGETABLES.** In New York, a cant term for oysters and clams.

**SAM.** A nickname given to the Know-Nothing or Native American party. See the articles *Hindoos*, *Know-Nothings*, and *Native Americans*.

The following capital parody is from the Washington "Evening Star" of November 3, 1856:

#### BURIAL OF SAM.

Not a State had he got nor Electoral vote,  
And he looked confoundedly flurried;  
Then wilted — dried up — and kinder gin eout,  
As we Hindoos around him hurried.

We buried him darkly that Tuesday night  
(For we fear'd he'd not keep until morning),  
By the struggling moonbeams' misty light  
And dark-lanterns dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,  
In a sheet of the "Organ" we wound him;  
Everlasting, we guess, will be his rest  
With so sleepy a print around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,  
But we cussed some, in bitter sorrow,  
As we thought how through Ellis & Co. we'd been bled,  
And the bets that were due on the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his oozy bed  
In a culvert that runs by "The Willows,"  
That Sag-Nichts and strangers would tread o'er his head,  
And we up the Salt River billows.

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,  
And o'er his spilt ash-cart upbraid him  
With the bloodshed he caused and the churches he burned  
Before the Democracy laid him.

Sadly but promptly we dropped him down  
In the peculiar field of his glory.  
We carved not a line, we raised not a stone;  
For we knew 't was a mighty dark story.

**SAMBO.** A term often applied to negroes. It is used more specifically to mean the offspring of a negro and mulatto.

**SAMP.** (Abenaki Ind., *seamp*, *nasaump*.) Roger Williams describes *nasaump* as "a kind of meale pottage unparched; from this the English call their *samp*, which is Indian corn, beaten and boiled, and eaten hot or cold with milke or butter, which are mercies beyond the natives' plaine water, and which is a dish exceedingly wholesome for the English bodies." — *Key to the Indian Language*, p. 33. *Samp* is still much used wherever Indian corn is raised.



Blue corn is light of digestion, and the English make a kind of loblolly of it to eat with milk, which they call *sampe*; they beat it in a mortar, and sifte the flower out of it. — *Josselyn's New England Rarities*, 1672.

It is ordered that the treasurer doe forthwith provide tenn barrells of cranburys, two hogshheads of speciall good *sampe*, and three thousand of codfish, — to be presented to his majesty, as a present from this court. — *Massachusetts Col. Records*, 1677, Vol. V. p. 156.

He slept until the morning light was seen  
Down through the dome to dance upon his brow ;  
Then Waban woke him to his simple cheer  
Of the pure fount, *nausamp*, and savory deer.  
*Durfee, Whatcheer.*

**SANCTIMONIOUSLYFIED.** This queer word explains itself.

I recollect an old *sanctimoniouslyfied* fellow who made his negroes whistle while they were picking cherries, for fear they should eat some. — *Crockett, Tour down East.*

**SAND-BOX.** A primitive sort of spittoon, consisting of a wooden box filled with sand.

**SAND-CHERRY.** (*Cerasus pumila*.) A prostrate or reclining shrub which grows on the sand-hills in the West and North. It bears a profusion of fruit, which is black when ripe, with an astringent taste, about as large as the common cultivated red cherry.

**SAND-FLEA, or BEACH-FLEA.** (Genus, *Orchestra*. Leach.) A small crustacean common along the shores of Long Island and other sandy places, which digs holes wherein it conceals itself, and lives upon dead animal substances.

**SAND-HILLERS.** A class of people in Georgia and South Carolina. They are said to be the descendants of the poor whites, who, being deprived of work by the introduction of slave labor, took refuge in the pine woods that cover the sandy hills of those States, where they have since lived in a miserable condition.

The *sand-hillers* are small, gaunt, and cadaverous, and their skin is just the color of the sand-hills they live on. They are incapable of applying themselves steadily to any labor, and their habits are very much like those of the old Indians. — *Olmsted's Slave States*, p. 507.

**SANG.** An abbreviation of *ginseng*. It is also used in Maryland and Virginia as a verb. *To go a singing* is to be engaged in gathering ginseng. In Alleghany Co., Maryland, is *Sang Run* near which is a well-known "*singing ground*."

**SANG-HOE.** The implement used in gathering ginseng.

**SANTA FÉ TEA.** An infusion of the leaves of the *Alstonia theaeformis*, used in New Mexico.

**SAPHEAD.** A blockhead; a stupid fellow. — *Craven Dialect*. In some other parts of England, *sapskull* is used.

Why is a dandy like a mushroom?

Because he's a regular *saphead*,  
His waist is remarkably slender,  
His growth is exceedingly rapid,  
And his top is uncommonly tender.

*Lit. World*, Dec. 14, 1850.

**SAPSUCKER.** A small woodpecker (the *dentrocopus* of ornithologists), so called from a common belief that it sucks the sap of trees.

**SARVES**, for *preserves*. So pronounced in some parts of the West.

We had also [for dinner] custard pies, and maple molasses, (usually called "them 'are molasses,") and preserved apples, preserved water-melon-rinds, and preserved red peppers and tomatoes — all termed, for brevity's sake (like words in Webster's Dictionary), *sarves*. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 183.

**SARSAPARILLA.** The name is applied to a species of *Aralia* and other plants used as substitutes for foreign sarsaparilla.

**SASS-TEA.** A decoction of sassafras; sassafras-tea.

In the morning Hoss Allen became dreadful poorly. The matron of the house boiled him *sass-tea*, which the old man said revived him mightily. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 72.

**SAUCE.** (Vulgarly pronounced *sass*.) Culinary vegetables and roots eaten with flesh. — *Webster*. This word is provincial in various parts of England in the same sense. Forby defines it as "any sort of vegetable eaten with flesh-meat." — *Norfolk Glossary*. *Garden-stuff* and *garden-ware* are the usual terms in England. See *Long Sauce*.

Roots, herbs, vine-fruits, and salad-flowers — they dish up in various ways, and find them very delicious *sauce* to their meats, both roasted and boiled, fresh and salt. — *Beverly's Hist. of Virginia*.

"If I should stay away to tea," said the Widow Bedott to her children, "don't be a lettin' into the plum *sass* and cake as you did the other day." — *Bedott Papers*, p. 88.

**SAULT**, pronounced *soo*. (Old French.) The rapids of the St. Lawrence and those connecting the Upper Lakes retain the French name; as, the *Sault St. Mary*, etc.

**SAUSAGE-MACHINE.** A machine for chopping or mincing meat for the purpose of making sausages.

**SAVAGE AS A MEAT AXE.** 1. Exceedingly savage; ferocious. This vulgar simile is often used in the Northern and Western States.

He came up and looked at me right plum in the face, as *savage as a meat axe*; and says he, "Give us your paw." — *Southern Sketches*, p. 32.

## 2. Exceedingly hungry, ravenous.

"Why, you don't eat nothing!" he exclaimed; "ridin' don't agree with you, I guess! Now, for my part, it makes me as *savage as a meat axe*." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 103.

It would be a charity to give the pious brother some such feed as chicken fixins and doins, for he looks half-starved and as *savage as a meat axe*. — *Carlton's New Purchase*.

**SAVAGEROUS.** *Savage, ferocious.* A low word. Southern.

Well, Captin', they were mighty *savagerous* after liquor; they'd been fightin' the whiskey barrel. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*.

I see there was hell in him, so I looked at him sort o' *savagerous*, and says I, "Look here, old hoss, how can you have the face to talk so?" — *Southern Sketches*.

The captain felt sorter wolfish, and lookin' at the stranger dained *savagerous*, said, "Who in creation are you?" — *Traits of American Humor*.

**SAVANNA.** (W. Ind. *savana*.) An open plain, or meadow, without wood.

The *savanna* is not a prairie. It is a level tract of land, often approaching the circular in shape, averaging one or two feet lower than the level land about it. It is supposed to be the basin of a former lake or collection of water, which has been filled up by the accumulation of soil and vegetable matter. The *savanna* is perfectly level, clothed in perpetual verdure, — except in winter, when it is covered with water, — and abounds in a great variety of flowers. The prairie differs not from other land, except in the absence of timber, which is supposed to have been destroyed in a former era by fires or by the aboriginal inhabitants. — *W. Flagg, in the Mag. of Horticulture*, Sept., 1854.

In some places lie plats of low and very rich ground, well timbered; in others large spots of meadows and *savannas*, wherein are hundreds of acres without any tree at all, but yield reeds and grass of incredible height. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book 2.

The island of San Pio is curiously diversified with alternate patches of *savannah*, bush, and marsh, and offers numerous coverts for wild animals. — *Squier's Waikna*, p. 236.

The flesh *savannas* of the Sangamon  
Here rise in gentle swells, and the long grass  
Is mixed with rustling hazels.

*Bryant, The Painted Cup.*

**TO SAVE.** To make sure, i. e. to kill game, or an enemy, whether man or beast. *To get* conveys the same meaning, both terms being used by the backwoodsmen of the Far West. The notorious Judge W—— of Texas, known through that State as "three legged Willie," once said in a speech at a barbecue (after his political opponent had been apologizing for having taken a man's life in a duel):

The gentleman need not make such a fuss about *getting* such a rascal; everybody knows that I have *shot* three, and two of them I *saved*.

**SAVEY, or SABBY.** (Corrupted from the Span. *sabe*, knows.) To know; to comprehend. A word of very extensive use wherever a *Lingua Franca* has been formed of the Spanish or Portuguese language in Asia, Africa, and America. It is used by the negroes in the West Indies, and in some of the Southern States.

When I read these stories, the negroes looked delighted, and said: "We *savey* dat well, misses." — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**SAW.** A joke, a trick.

**TO SAW.** To hoax; to play a joke upon one. A Western term. In the State of Maine, to *saw* means to scold.

**SAW-GUMMER.** See *Gummer*.

**SAW-LOG.** Logs cut from trees into the proper length for boards, before being carried to the mill to be sawed.

**SAW-WHET.** The popular name, in some of the Northern States, for the Little Owl, or Acadian Owl of Audubon (*Ulula acadica*). "It has a sharp note like the filing of a saw, and another like the tinkling of a bell." — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**SAWYER.** This may be truly called an American word; for no country without a Mississippi and Missouri could produce a *sawyer*.

*Sawyers* are formed by trees, which, growing on the banks of the river, become undermined by the current, and fall into the stream. They are swept along with the branches partly above water, rising and falling with the waves; whence their name. They are extremely dangerous to steamboats, which sometimes run foul of them, and are either disabled or sunk to the bottom.

A little above our location thar war a bend in the stream, which kind a turned the drift t' other eend up, and planted them about the spot between our cabins — snags and *sawyers* just thar wur dredful plenty. — *A Night on the Missouri*.

Thar I war, said Dan, perched upon a *sawyer*, bobbin' up and down in the water. — *The Americans at Home*.

**SCALLAWAG.** A scamp; a scapegrace. A *scallawag* has been defined to be, "like many other wags, a compound of loafer, blackguard, and scamp."

Dr. Collier has been showing his model artists here, and the mean *skallewag* left without paying the printer. — *Buffalo Courier*.

You good-for-nothin' young *scallawag*, is that the way you take care of that poor dear boy, to let him fall into the pond. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*.

That *scallawag* of a fellow ought to be kicked out of all decent society. — *Western Sketches*.

**SCALPING.** A barbarous custom, among Indian warriors, of taking off their enemies' scalps with the hair on. These are preserved as trophies of victory. — *Encycl. Amer.*

**SCALPING-KNIFE.** A knife used by the Indians in taking off the scalp of their prisoners. — *Worcester.*

**SCALP-LOCK.** A long tuft of hair left on the crown of the head by the warriors of some Indian tribes.

The Arapahos do not shave their heads as the Pawnees and Osages do, merely braiding the centre or *scalp-lock*, and decorating it with a gay ribbon or feather of the war-eagle. — *Ruxton's Adv in the Rocky Mts.* p. 237.

The leggins of some of these Indians were ornamented with *scalp-locks* along the outer seam, exhibiting a dark history of the wearer's prowess. — *Maine Reid, The Scalp-Hunters*, p. 102.

**SCARE, or SKEER.** A fright; among animals, a stampede.

In the course of an hour Major Howard rode into camp with his prisoner, who was really half frightened to death. In fact, the man afterwards died on the road; and those who knew him best said that he never got over the *scare*. — *Kendall's Santa Fe Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 130.

Nothing can exceed the grandeur of the scene when a large cavallada, or drove of horses, takes a *scare*. Old, weather-beaten, time-worn, and broken-down steeds — horses that have nearly given out from hard work and old age — will at once be transformed into wild and prancing colts. — *Kendall's Santa Fe Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 97.

**TO SCARE UP.** To pick up; to find. A word adopted from the fowler's vocabulary.

A great man; a man clearly discerning his position, resolved to control events, and not allow the winds and tides of circumstance to shape his course, — surrounds himself with men of the same clear, energetic, decided character. He does not make the noodles and nobodies that he may *scare up* anywhere his chief agents. — *Putnam's Mag.* Sept. 1853.

Next came the bag, which Signor Blitz turned inside out, patted it in his hands, showed it to the audience, held it by every corner, slapped it against the floor, and then astonished the assembly by taking out of it a dozen eggs, which he allowed would be a very useful bag in a family, in *scaring up* eggs for breakfast. — *The States (Washington)*, 1857.

If some financial Solomon,  
Before another set of sun,  
Don't tell us what is to be done  
To *scare up* cash,  
We all perforce must cut and run,  
Or go to smash. — *N. Y. Evening Post.*

**SCARESOME or SKEERSOME.** Frightful.

It's cruel *skeersome*, about there. — *Margaret*, p. 275

**SCARY, or SKEERY.** Easily scared ; timorous.

I got a little *scary* and a good deal mad. There was I perched up on a sawyer, bobbun' up and down in the water. — *Robb, Squatter Life.*

Aye, for a town-bred boy or a *skeary* woman. There's old Esther ; she has no more fear of a red-skin than of a suckling cub. — *Cooper, The Prairie.*

**SCHEDULE.** In the State of Rhode Island, the printed "Acts and Resolves" of the General Assembly.

**SCHNAPPS.** (Germ.) Strong liquor, especially gin.

**SCHOOL.** This word in the phrase, "a *school* of fish," applied to a large number of fish swimming together, appears to be derived from the Dutch "*een school visch.*" The expression is also provincial in England.

A grave and quiet man was he,  
Who loved his hook and rod ;  
So even ran his line of life,  
His neighbors thought it odd.

For science and for books he said  
He never had a wish ;  
No school to him was worth a fig,  
Except a *school* of fish. — *Saxe, The Cold Water Man.*

**SCHOOL-COMMISSIONER.** The officer whose duty it is to have the administration and superintendence of public instruction in a State. He is usually elected as other State officers are, although sometimes, as in Rhode Island, he is appointed by the Governor, by and with the consent of the Senate.

**SCHOOL-COMMITTEE.** A committee appointed by a town or city to have the entire management of its public schools. These committees usually serve without compensation.

**SCHOOL-DISTRICT.** A division of a city or State for establishing schools. The State of New York is divided into more than ten thousand such partitions or school districts.

**SCHOOL-FUND.** A fund set apart, the income of which is by State law expressly appropriated to the support of public instruction.

**SCHOOL-LIBRARY.** The library of a common school. In the State of New York, a portion of the income of the school-fund is appropriated for common school libraries, and the remainder by the districts where the schools are established.

**SCHOOL-MA'AM.** A school-mistress. This term is peculiar to New England. See *Ma'am School.*

A correspondent of a New York paper, writing from Washington,

thus complains of some of the common practices in the House of Representatives :

Here tobacco-chewing is national, not sectional. Everybody but the President chews. I went over to the ladies' gallery ; but I found it still worse, as the girls kept up a continual chatter, and that on so high a key that I wonder the Speaker did not clear the gallery. The particular set I now refer to were probably country *school-marms*, who know a little of everything, and meant to show it.

We can make a new application of an old story, as the *school-marm* said when she spanked the little boy with "Robinson Crusoe." — *Knickerbocker Mag.* Feb. 1857.

**SCHOOL-MONEY.** The money received from towns or the State for the support of common schools.

**SCHOOL-SECTION.** A section of land set apart for public schools. All public lands, before being offered for sale, are accurately surveyed by practical surveyors in ranges of townships of six miles square ; which townships are subdivided into thirty-six sections of one mile square, each section generally containing six hundred and forty acres. That the benefits of education might be extended to our frontier settlers and their posterity, the sixteenth section in each township, or one thirty-sixth part of the public lands, has been set apart for the support of schools. — *Rep. of Com. of Gen. Land Office*, 1849.

**SCHOOL-TAX.** A tax usually levied upon towns or districts for the support of its public or common schools. This tax is usually in addition to the appropriation by the State for the same object.

**TO SCOOT.** To walk fast ; to run.

The fellow sat down on a hornet's nest ; and if he did n't run and holler, and *scoot* through the briar bushes, and tear his trowsers. — *Hill's Yankee Stories*.

We were bound to the South Seas after sperm whales, but we were eight months gettin' there. The captain he *scooted* round into one port an' another — down to Caraccas, into Rio, etc. — *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1858.

A Southern or Western man, when he goes *skewtin* about, buying goods in business hours, keeps his eye-teeth skinned — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**SCOW.** (Dutch, *schouw*.) A large, flat-bottomed boat, generally used as a ferry-boat, or as a lighter for loading and unloading vessels when they cannot approach the wharf. On Lake Ontario they are sometimes rigged like a schooner or sloop, with a lee-board or sliding keel, when they make tolerably fast sailers. The word is used in Scotland. A *mud-scow* (Dutch, *modder-schouw*) is a vessel of this description, used in New York for cleaning out the docks ; a dredging machine.

**TO SCRAPE.** "To *scrape* cotton," means to hoe cotton. Southern.

**SCRATCH.** *No great scratch.* A vulgar though common phrase, implying not worth much — no great shakes.

There are a good many Joneses in Georgia, and I know some myself that ain't no great scratches. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 136.

**TO SCRATCH.** To *scratch* a man's name, in political parlance, is to strike it from the printed ticket of the "regular nomination."

We remember, many years ago, at one of our charter elections, a candidate for the office of alderman had the tickets bearing his name printed with a peculiar mark. When the poll was closed, that particular ticket was known to be full one hundred ahead. The would-be alderman, in the gladness of his heart, invited his friends to his house, where he had spread refreshments. Just as he was returning thanks for his election, the official returns were brought in, from which it appeared that though all the other candidates upon the ticket were successful, so many had *scratched* the name of the alderman, that he was defeated by more than fifty votes. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

**SCRATCH TICKET**, properly *scratched ticket*. An election ticket with one or more names of candidates erased. See *Split Ticket*.

**SCRAWL.** In New England, a ragged, broken branch of a tree, or other brushwood; brush. — *Webster*.

**SCRAWNY.** Bony, bare-boned, low in flesh, scraggy. A corrupt pronunciation of the word *scranny*, which is used in the same sense in England. Southern.

If my memory serves me, Elder Sniffles is rather a tall, *scrawny* man, with eyes that look like a couple of peeled onions, and kind o' squintin' too. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 103.

All the spare curses I accumulate I dedicate to these white-livered, hatchet-faced, thin-blooded, *scrawny* reformers, who prescribe saw-dust puddings and plank beds, and brief sleep, and early walks, and short commons for the rising generation. — *Timothy Titcomb's Letters*.

**SCREAMER.** A bouncing fellow or girl. This, like the word *roarer*, is one of the many terms transferred from animals to men by the hunters of the West.

If he's a specimen of the Choctaws that live in these parts, they are *screamers*. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*.

Mary is a *screamer* of a girl; I'd rather have her than all the rest. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

"Have you got my cabin chalked down?" he inquired.

"Yes," answered the artist, "and you too."

"Good, by thunder!" said the squatter. "When you show me to them English fellers, just tell 'em I'm a Mississippi *screamer*. I can hoe more corn in a day than any Yankee machine ever invented; and when I hit any thing, from bullock down to human natur', they generally think lightnin' is comin'." — *St. Louis Reveille*.

The folks are all waiting to see the fast steamer

That's coming from Albany down to this pier;



Ah, here she is now ; you, sir, ain't she a screamer ?

In New York, the swiftest boats always land here.

*A Glance at New York.*

SCREW. 1. One who squeezes all he can out of those with whom he has any dealings ; an extortioner ; miser. Colloquial here as in England.

2. In some American colleges, an excessive, unnecessarily minute, and annoying examination of a student by an instructor, is called a *screw*. The instructor is often designated by the same name. — *Hall's College Words*.

One must experience the stammering and stuttering, the unending doubtings and guessings, to understand fully the power of a mathematical *screw*. — *Harvard Register*, p. 378.

The consequence was, a patient submission to the *screw*, and a loss of college honors and patronage. — *A Tour through College*. Boston, 1832.

TO SCREW. To press with excessive and unnecessarily minute examination. — *Hall's College Words*.

Who would let a tutor knave

*Screw* him like a Guinea slave ! — *Rebbluad*, p. 53.

He was a wise man, and a good man too,

And robed himself in green whene'er he came to *screw*.

*Our Chronicle of '26*.

SCREWS. *To put the screws on ; to turn the screws*. To press, and figuratively to extort, to enforce payment in money transactions ; to force a debtor, by any compulsory means, to pay. The allusion is to the ancient mode of torture by thumb-screws.

As soon as the banks have put out a pretty good line of call loans, and the brokers have involved themselves deeply in fancy stock transactions on time, the *screws* will be suddenly *turned*, and we shall find a general desire to realize among those who are now so anxious to buy. — *N. Y. Herald*.

The New York Times, in speaking of a contraction by the banks, says :

Such *turns of the screws* as we have had for the last three weeks, if continued, would bring almost every mercantile house in New York to wreck. — Sept. 15, 1857.

Love strains the heart-strings of the human race, and not unfrequently *puts the screws on* so hard as to snap them asunder, and leave every moral and physical instrument as completely out of tune as a corn-stalk fiddle in the hands of a plough-boy. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 302.

SCRIMP, or SKRIMP. 1. Short ; scanty. — *Webster*.

2. A pinching miser ; a niggard ; a close-fisted person. — *Webster*.

The word, in both senses, is colloquial in the North of England and in the United States.

TO SCRIMP. To contract ; to shorten ; to make too small or short ; to

limit or straiten ; as, "to *scrimp* the pattern of a coat." Colloquial in England and in the United States.

**SCRIMPING.** Scanty ; close ; parsimonious. Also used adverbially.

Bethier Nobles knows how every lady in town carries on her kitchen concerns, — how *scrumping* they live, and all that. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 333.

**SCRODS.** (*Shreds?*) Small pieces of fish, or small fish for boiling. New England.

Peter Gott, in addition to the money he had saved, had a pile of nice *scrods*, and as many salted fish for winter as the family needed — *The Cape Ann Fisherman*.

**TO SCROUGE.** To crowd ; to squeeze. A word provincial in England and in this country. It is used in the Southern States, and among children at the North.

The ladies were obliged to stand up and be *scrouged* until chairs could be brought. — *Drama in Pokerville*.

After hard *scrouging* each way some hundred yards, we came together and held a council. — *Carlton, New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 59.

Them boys that's a *scrouging* each other will find plenty of room this way. — *Peter Cram, Knick. Mag.*

And as the North has took to brustlin',  
At being *scrouged* from off the roost,  
I'll tell ye what 'll save all tusslin',  
And give our side a handsome boost.

*Biglow Papers*, p. 92.

**SCROUGER.** A bouncing fellow or girl. A Western vulgarism.

Tom the engineer was a roaring, tearing, bar State *scrouger* — could chaw up any specimen of the human race, any quantity of tobacco, and drink steam without finching. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Some of the families in them diggins had about twenty in number ; and the gals among them warn't any of your pigeon critters, that a fellow dassent tech for fear of spilin' em, but real *scrougers* ; any of 'em could lick a bar easy — *Ibid.*

Congo is a *scrouger* ; he's up a gum, and no bug-eater, I tell you ; he carries a broad row, weeds out every thing—hoes de corn and digs de taters. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 99.

**SCRUB OAK.** The popular name of several dwarfish species of oak.

We left the buffalo camp and had a toilsome and harassing march of two hours over ridges of hills covered with a ragged, meagre forest of *scrub-oaks*, and broken by deep gullies. — *Irving, Tour on the Prairies*, p. 135.

**SCRUMPTIOUS.** Nice ; particular ; fastidious ; excellent. Probably a corruption of *scrupulous*. A vulgarism.

I don't want to be *scrumptious*, judge ; but I do want to be a man. — *Margaret*, p. 304.

**SCUP.** 1. (Abenaki Ind., *scuppauog*.) A small fish abounding in the

waters of New York and New England. In Rhode Island they are called *scup*; in New York, paugies or porgies. See *Porgy*.

2. (Dutch, *schop*.) A swing. A New York word.

TO SCUP. (Dutch, *schoppen*.) To swing. Common in New York.

SCUPPERNONG GRAPE. By most authors this is believed to be a variety of the *Vitis vulpina* of Linnæus, or Southern Fox Grape. It has characters of its own, however, and is held to be distinct by Michaux and Elliot, as *Vitis rotundifolia*, and by Rafinesque as *Vitis muscadina*. It is indigenous on the Scuppernong river and lake in North Carolina, and yields a highly esteemed wine.

TO SCURRY. To scour, to scud, to run in haste. This word is colloquial in England and America, and is a variation of the verb *skirr* of the dictionaries.

Our friend Kendall, of the Picayune, was, when last heard from, *scurrying* over the German portions of the European continent. — *New York Com. Adv.*

SCUSS, for *scarce*. So pronounced by the backwoodsmen of the West.

The unfortunate traveller urged in vain [for food for his horse]. Hay was *scuss*, and potatoes were *scusser*. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

SEA-BASS. (*Centopristes nigricans*.) A fish that abounds in the Atlantic on banks and off steep bars near the channels, rarely near the shore. As an article of food, it is reckoned among the best of the fishes of the coast.

SEA-DEVIL. See *Devil-Fish*.

SEA-ISLAND COTTON. A kind of cotton celebrated for the fineness and length of its fibre, and raised only on the sea coast or islands of Georgia and South Carolina. Comp. *Upland Cotton*.

SEA-PIKE. See *Bill-Fish*.

SEA-ROBIN. (*Prionotus lineatus*.) A small salt-water fish, which keeps near or upon the bottom, using its pectoral processes as organs of progression. In swimming or resting, the broad pectoral fins are generally spread out horizontally to their fullest extent, presenting a very beautiful and striking appearance, and closely resembling the wings of a butterfly. It hence receives its name of Flying-Fish. From the croaking or grunting noise it makes when caught, it is sometimes called Pig-Fish.

SEA-SIDE GRAPE. The *Coccoloba urifera*, so called in the West Indies.

TO SEAL. In Mormon phraseology, all wives taken after the first are called spiritual wives, and are said to be *sealed* to the husband.

The extra wives of the Mormons are called by some of them "spirituals," by others *sealed* ones, while our landlady calls them "fixins." — *Ferris, the Mormons at Home*, p. 114.

People, according to Mormon technology, are married for time, but *sealed* for eternity. — *Hyde's Mormonism*, p. 84.

But crowds on crowds, as was revealed  
To Brigham, were to Brigham *sealed*;  
Until, for want of room, 't is said,  
A bevy held each harem bed !  
The beautiful he *sealed* to be  
Partakers of his temporal rest;  
While suppliants "for eternity,"  
Content to be hereafter blest,  
Were *sealed* to be his "spirit" spouses,  
And who — the unbelieving say —  
Lived happier far with him than they  
Who dwelt in his terrestrial houses !

*The Mormoniad.*

**SEALER.** In New England, an officer appointed by the town or other proper authority, to examine and try weights and measures, and set a stamp on such as are according to the standards established by the State; also an officer who inspects leather, and stamps such as is good. These are called *sealers* of weights and measures, and *sealers* of leather. — *Webster*.

**SEALING.** The ceremony, among the Mormons, of taking a "spiritual" wife.

These left-hand marriages are called *sealings*; the woman is said to be "sealed" to the man. — *Ferris, The Mormons at Home*, p. 114.

**SEAMSTER.** A seamstress.

**SEARCHER.** An instrument resembling an auger, used in the inspection of butter, to ascertain the quality of that contained in firkins. New England.

**SEASON.** A common term at the South for a shower of rain or period of damp weather suitable for setting out tobacco and other plants.

This *season* has come up mighty sudden. I should n't wonder if it rained all night. — *Ida May*.

**SEAWAN, or SEAWANT.** An Indian word meaning the same as *wampum*, formerly in use among the early colonists of New York.

The speaking now ceased, and they gave each of us ten fathoms of *seewan*, which is their money, each fathom being worth four guilders. — *De Vries, New Netherlands*.

Keift could not vie with Solomon as to the precious metals, but he determined, as an equivalent, to flood the streets of New Amsterdam with Indian money . . . . called *seawant* or wampum. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

A quantity of Dutch commodities was purchased on this occasion by the New

Plymouth people; especially *seawan* or wampum, which the English found to be afterwards very beneficial in their trade with the natives.— *O'Callaghan, Hist. of New Netherlands*, p. 108.

**SECESSIONISTS.** The party in the South which would dissolve the Union, or go out of it immediately, without the coöperation of other States. Another party, calling themselves "Coöperationists," would only dissolve it when other States had joined them.

**SECTION.** 1. A distinct part of a city, town, country, or people; a part of a territory separated by geographical lines, or of a people considered as distinct. Thus we say, the Northern and Eastern *section* of the United States, the Middle *section*, the Southern or Western *section*. — *Webster*.

2. The newly surveyed government lands at the West are laid out or divided into squares of six hundred and forty acres, which are called *sections*. These are again divided into four parts of one hundred and sixty acres each, called *quarter-sections*.

**SECTIONAL.** Relating to a section, having regard to the interests of a section, i. e. a division or part, of the country, as the North, South, East, or West. The word is often thus used by political speakers and writers in contradistinction to *national*, which see.

All *sectional* interests, or party feelings, it is hoped, will hereafter yield to schemes of ambition. — *Judge Story*.

To that central attraction I have been delighted to find the thoughts, the affections, the memories of the people, in whatever part of the country — from the ocean to the prairies of the West, from the land of granite and ice to the land of the palmetto and the magnolia — instinctively turn. They have their *sectional* loves and hatreds, but before the dear name of Washington they are absorbed and forgotten. — *Speech of Hon. E. Everett*, July 5, 1858.

Mr. Miles, of South Carolina, said he was that bugbear a *sectional* man. He represented in part the South, which, being the weaker party, had to unite in order to protect herself, and was therefore *sectional*. — *Debate in H. of Reps* Jan. 26, 1859.

**SECTIONALISM.** The having regard to the interests of a section of the country, rather than of the nation at large.

On the 5th of July, 1858, the patriotism and intellect of Massachusetts was represented in a striking contrast with the littleness and *sectionalism* which now rules the old Bay State. In New York, the profound scholar and universal statesman, Caleb Cushing, appeared before the Old Tammany Society; in Boston, Rufus Choate, the unrivalled orator and inspired genius, delivered an oration, which, like all of his efforts, was original, learned, and unapproachable; and in the same city Edward Everett, who, perhaps, above all living Americans, has earned the triple laureate of orator, statesman, and scholar, and adds to these the noble designation of the national philanthropist, graced the two celebrations with his presence, and uttered words of national patriotism which must warm the heart of every true American citizen. — *Newark Journal*, July, 1858.

**TO SECTIONIZE.** To divide or lay off into sections, especially the public lands, which is done before they are offered for sale. Western.

So much of the vacant lands of the republic shall be surveyed and *sectionized*, as will be sufficient to satisfy all claims. — *Laws of Texas*, Nov 1828.

**TO SEE THE ELEPHANT** is a South-western phrase, and means, generally, to undergo any disappointment of high-raised expectations. It is in fact nearly or quite synonymous with the ancient phrase "go out for wool and come back shorn." For instance, men who volunteered for the Mexican war, expecting to reap lots of glory and enjoyment, but who instead found only sickness, fatigue, privations, and suffering, were said to have "*seen the elephant*." Afterwards those who went to California with golden expectations, and returned disappointed, were said to have "*seen the elephant*." The poor creatures who were induced to share the fortunes of the filibuster Walker had an opportunity of viewing a quadruped of the largest stature.

Mr. Kendall, in his "Narrative of the Texan Santa Fé Expedition," tells some amusing anecdotes of "*seeing the elephant*," and is the earliest writer who mentions the expression, which he adds is very common in Texas, and which he had never heard until he entered the Cross Timbers. This was in the year 1841.

The meaning of the expression I will explain. When a man is disappointed in any thing he undertakes, when he has seen enough, when he gets tired and sick of any job he may have set himself about, he has "*seen the elephant*." We had been buffeting about during the day, cutting away trees, crossing deep ravines and gullies, and turning and twisting some fifteen or twenty miles to gain five — we had finally to encamp by a mud-hole of miserable water, and the spies had been unable to find any beyond. This combination of ills induced the old hunter to remark, "*I've seen the elephant*;" and upon the same principle I will here state that by this time I had obtained something more than a glimpse of the animal myself. — Vol. I. p 109.

A man brought before the Recorder of New Orleans, charged with having been found drunk the previous night, after appealing to the court, closed with the following remarks :

"Spare my feelings, Squire, and don't ask me to tell any more. Here I am in town without a rock in my pocket, without a skirt to my coat or crown to my hat; but, Squire, I'll say no more, *I've seen the elephant*." The Recorder let him off on condition that he would leave town. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

Although the merchants from the South and West may buy goods in Philadelphia, all find their way to New York to spend their pocket-money, buy brass watches at the mock auctions, and *see the elephant* generally. — *Phil. Cor. of N. Y. Tribune*.

**SEED-TICK.** A minute species of *Acarus*, which burrows in the skin and produces an intolerable itching. Some consider it to be the young of the dog or sheep tick.

SEEN, for *saw*. Ex. "I *seen* him do it." This corruption is common in various parts of the country.

Peter Cram's fits is awful, and go ahead of any thing we ever *seen*. — *Knickerbocker Mag.* Vol. XVII.

She is more moral than a preacher,  
More dignified than a queen ;  
No mockin' bird can ever reach her,  
In singin', that I ever *seen*. — *Evening Post*.

TO SEEP. To run through fine pores or interstices, as the juice of fruits strained through a sieve or cloth.

SEEPY. *Seepy* land is land under cultivation that is not well drained. Maryland and Virginia.

SELECTMAN. A magistrate annually elected by the freemen of a town or township in New England, to superintend and manage the affairs and government of the town. The number is commonly from three to five. — *Worcester*.

SELLER'S OPTION. This gives the seller the option to deliver any time within the time of his contract, or at its maturity, and the buyer is required to take it when offered. The buyer pays interest up to delivery. Sales at *seller's option* are generally a fraction below the current cash price. The speculator who sells stocks on his own or the buyer's option draws interest on his contract for the date until it closed. — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.* Vol. XXXVII.

SEMI-OCCASIONALLY. A cant phrase of recent introduction, meaning once in a while.

I went to the American Legation and got my friend Kane, the attaché, to call with me upon Jack Cathcart, who was supposed to be diligently employed in making himself a scientific physician, but, in point of fact, walking the hospital but *semi-occasionally*, and seeing life in Paris very constantly, especially that part of it which is to be seen by gas or lamp-light. — *Putnam's Monthly*, May, 1854.

Chewing tobacco not only infuses a deadly poison into your blood, but leads you on to an inclination for occasional dissipation — and from that to *semi-occasional* intoxication — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 90.

SENATE. In the United States, *senate* denotes the higher branch or house of a legislature. Such is the *Senate* of the United States, or upper house of the Congress ; and in most of the States, the higher and least numerous branch of the legislature is called the *Senate*. In the United States the *Senate* is an elective body. — *Webster*.

SENATORIAL. Entitled to elect a senator ; as, "a *senatorial* district." — *Webster*.

SENCE, for *since*. Common among the uneducated.

Ere Adam's fall,  
He built stone wall;  
But ever *sence*  
He make brush fence. — *Old Virginia Song*.

TO SENSE. To comprehend; as, "Do you *sense* that?" New England.

SERAPE. (Span.) A Mexican blanket, with an opening in the middle for the head. They are woven by hand, of gay colors, and are only worn by the men in cool weather, instead of an overcoat.

The Indians were mounted on mules, wrapped in *serapes*, or Mexican blankets, and wore head-dresses, beads, and other Indian ornaments. — *Capt Whipple's Explorations*, p. 34.

We wrapped ourselves in blankets or overcoats, while our escort, who put on their gaudy *serapes*, made a very picturesque appearance. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*, Vol. II. p. 500.

I now turned my back on the last settlement, . . . and knew that I had seen the last of civilized man under the garb of a Mexican *serape*. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 207.

SERIOUS. Particularly attentive to religious concerns or one's own religious state. — *Webster*.

*Serious* has [in New England] the cant acceptance of religious. — *Kendall's Travels*.

SERVANT. A term often used synonymously with "slave" at the South, as it is in the English Bible.

Still I confess (for I will put down nothing that history will not confirm) that cruelties are sometimes exercised by the master upon the slave. Considering the number of masters and *servants* in this latitude, I cannot say that is often the case — in truth it is very seldom the case. — *A Voice from the South*, p. 32.

TO SERVE UP. To expose to ridicule; to expose.

SERVICE-BERRY. (*Amelanchier canadensis*.) A wild fruit common to the British provinces in America and the Northern States, described by Sir George Simpson as "a sort of cross between the cranberry and the black currant." It is a good article of food, and is sometimes mixed with pemmican. The plant is also called Shad-bush.

Among the usual fruit-bearing shrubs and bushes, I here notice the *service-berry*. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 114.

Near the Del Norte grows plentifully a shrub which produces a fruit called by the mountaineers *service-berry*, of a dark blue, the size of a small grape, and of pleasant flavor. — *Ruxton's Mexico*, p. 204.

SESSIONS, in some of the States, is particularly used for a court of justices,



held for granting licenses to innkeepers or taverners, for laying out new highways or altering old ones, and the like. — *Webster*.

SET. Fixed in opinion; determined; firm; obstinate; as, "a man *set* in his opinions or way." — *Webster*.

TO SET. To fix; to cause to stop; to obstruct; as, "*to set* a coach in the mire;" "the wagon or team *was set* at the hill." In some of the States *stall* is used in a like sense. — *Webster*.

SETTING-POLE. A pole shod with iron, used for propelling vessels or boats up rivers, in shoal water.

TO SETTLE. To be ordained or installed over a parish, church, or congregation. "A. B. was invited *to settle* in the first society at New Haven." "N. D. *settled* in the ministry very young." — *Webster*.

SEVEN UP. The Western name for a game of cards commonly called All Fours.

Seated, Indian fashion, round the fires, with a blanket spread before them, groups are seen with their cards, playing at euker, poker, and *seven-up*, the regular mountain games. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 236.

We found the storekeeper sitting on an empty keg at a rickety table, playing *seven-up* for the liquor for one of his customers. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 115.

Simon and Bill were in a fence corner very earnestly engaged at *seven-up*. — *Simon Suggs*.

SEVERALS, for *several*, is used in Pennsylvania. "How many hats have you?" "I used to have *severals*, but now have got only one."

SHACK. A vagabond. Ex. "He's a poor *shack* of a fellow." It is used in some parts of England and in New England.

All creation knows Nab Hincken ain't nobody. Why, her father was a poor drunken *shack*, and her mother took in washin'. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 34.

I don't believe Bill would have turned out such a miserable *shack*, if he'd a decent woman for a wife. — *New England Tales*.

SHACKLY. Shaky; rickety; as, "What a *shackly* old carriage!"

The words of the poet might answer for me on a pinch, always excepting the general fly-offs and moral unhitches incident to poor *shackly* mortality. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

SHAD-BUSH. A plant so called from its flowering about the time that shad ascend the rivers in early spring. Its delicate sprays, covered with white blossoms before the trees are yet in leaf, have a singularly beautiful appearance in the woods. See *Service-Berry*.

Within the woods . . .  
 . . . the *shad-bush*, white with flowers,  
 Brightened the glens; the new-leaved butternut

And quivering poplar to the loving breeze  
Gave a balsamic fragrance.

*Bryant, The Old Man's Council.*

**SHAD-BELLY COAT.** One which slopes gradually from the front to the tails, and has no angle. Drab coats of this shape are worn by Quakers, who are hence sometimes called *shad-bellies*.

**SHADE-TREE.** A tree planted for the sake of the shade which it affords.

**SHAG-BARK.** (*Carya alba*.) A tall and handsome species of hickory, the old trunks of which are very rough barked. The wood is very valuable as timber and for fuel; and the fruit furnishes the principal hickory-nuts of the market. It is also called Shell-bark. — *Gray*.

**TO SHAKE A STICK AT.** A ridiculous phrase very often heard in low language. When a man is puzzled to give one an idea of a very great number, he calls it "more than you can *shake a stick at*."

New York is an everlastin' great concern, and, as you may well suppose, there's about as many people in it as you could *shake a stick at*. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New York*.

I've been licked fifty times, and got more black eyes and bloody noses than you could *shake a stick at*, for the purity of our illegal rights. — *J. C. Neal, Peter Brush*.

We got a little dry or so, and wanted a horn; but this was a temperance house, and there was nothing to treat a friend to that was worth *shaking a stick at*. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 87.

**SHAKES.** 1. Fever and ague, intermittent fever, is sometimes called "the *shakes*."

2. An earthquake.

The springs fail once in a while since the *shakes* of 1812. — *Western Gazetteer*.

**SHAKY.** Wavering, uncertain.

A recent estimate is wrong as to the New York and Pennsylvania delegations. At least four of the latter are adverse, and several others *shaky*, with a leaning in the same direction. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 21, 1858.

**SHANGHAI.** A tall dandy. So called in allusion to the long-legged fowls from Shanghai, in China, which were all the rage a few years ago.

I became wildly extravagant, indulged in broadcloth and fine linen, in kid gloves and a stove-pipe hat, a cane and French calf boots; used cologne, hair oil, and scented my handkerchief with "jockey-club;" wore a ring, was a connoisseur in cigars, and cultivated the acquaintance of the fair sex. In fact, I degenerated into a fop, and became a *shanghai* of the most exotic breed. — *The Great Republic Magazine*, Jan. 1859, p. 70.

**TO SHANTY.** To dwell in a shanty or temporary hut.

Mark Shuff and a friend of his, who were trapping, *shanted* on the outlet, just at the foot of Tupper's Lake. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 197.

We came down the Allegany in two canoes, and *shantied* on the Ohio. We hid our canoes, struck across the country, and travelled about exploring for six weeks. — *Ibid.*, p. 212.

These mountain breezes are very inspiring, and with expanded chests the sportsmen look towards the blue ridges with emulation, and brace themselves to meet the rude exigences of a "tramp," and "*shanteeing out*" for a few days amidst storms or sunshine, as the covering heavens may send! — *N. Y. Courier*.

**SHANTYING GROUND.** The place where shanties or rude huts are erected.

When we got back to our *shantying ground* we were tuckered out, as you may believe. — *Hammond, Northern Scenes*, p. 212.

**SHARK.** A lean, hungry hog. Western.

**SHARKING.** Fishing for sharks. A favorite sport in the waters of Narragansett Bay, where huge hooks, stout cords, a heavy club to knock the fish on the head, long knives to disengage the hook, and other appliances, are used.

**SHARP STICK.** To be after one with a *sharp stick* is to pursue him keenly for the purpose of revenge, or to get something from him.

**TO SHAVE.** To discount promissory notes or bills at a high rate of interest.

Make your money by *shaving* notes or stock-jobbing, and every door in New York is thrown open; make the same amount by selling Indian candy, and the cold shoulder of the Fifth Avenue is turned upon you. — *Life in New York*.

If the Stock Broker thinks he *shaves*,  
Or if the victim thinks he's *shaved*,  
Let both the rascals have their say,  
And he that's cheated, let him pay.

*Parody on Emerson's Brahma.*

**SHAVE DOWN.** A riotous, boisterous dance, so called in the West. In the Eastern States, the Virginia reel, which generally closes a social ball or dancing party, is called a *break-down*.

An innocent countryman, on going to church in New York, heard, for the first time, before entering, the organ, from which he concluded that some sort of a "*shave down*" was about to commence. Just at that moment, a gentleman invited him to walk in and take a seat. "Not 'zactly, Mister — I ain't used to no such dom's on Sunday; and, besides, I don't dance!"

**SHAVER.** This word, in the United States, is applied to money brokers, who purchase notes at more than legal interest. Banks, when they resort to any means to obtain a large discount, are also called *shavers*, or *shaving banks*. Many such are known; but they evade the penalty of the usury laws by discounting at legal interest, and giving the proceeds of the note so discounted in a draft on some distant place, or in uncurrent money, which is again purchased by the bank or its agents at a discount.

To sell our notes at a great loss to brokers, or, in other words, to get them unmercifully *shaved*, was what we wished to avoid. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 123.

**SHECOONERY.** A whimsical corruption of the word *chicanery*, used at the South.

This town's got a monstrous bad name for meanery and *shecoonery* of all sorts. — *Chronicles of Pineville*, p. 47

Among other topics, he dwelt upon the verdancy of his neighbors, and the *shecoonery* which had been practised upon them. — *Ibid.* p. 48.

**SHEDDER-CRAB.** A crab which has recently cast its shell, also called a Soft Crab. It is a delicacy much esteemed by epicures, and a "killing" bait for striped bass.

**TO SHELL CORN.** To remove the grains of Indian corn from the cob. In the South the phrase "to hull corn" is used in the same sense.

**SHEEP-LAUREL.** See *Calf-kill*.

**SHEEP-MEAT.** Mutton is often so called in the West.

**SHEEPSHEAD.** (*Sargus ovis*.) A fine large salt-water fish, so called from the resemblance of its head to that of a sheep. It is esteemed a great delicacy.

**SHEEPSKIN.** 1. The parchment diploma received by students on taking their degree at college.

This apostle of ourn never rubbed his back agin a college, nor toted about no *sheepskins* — no, never! . . . . How you'd a perished in your sins, if the first preachers had stayed till they got *sheepskins*! — *Carlton's New Purchase*.

When first I saw a *sheepskin*,  
In Prex's hand I spied it,  
I'd given my hat and boots, I would,  
If I could have been beside it.

But now that last Biennial's past;  
I skinned and fizzled through;  
And so in spite of scrapes and flunks  
I'll have a *sheepskin* too.

*R. S. Willis, Song of the Sheepskin.*

If we came to college fresh and green,  
We go back home with a huge *sheepskin*.

*Songs of Yale College, 1853.*

2. A person who has received a diploma, who has had a college education.

I can say as well as the best o' them *sheepskins*, if you don't get religion and be saved, you'll be lost teetotally and forever. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**SHEER.** A term applied in the United States to fabrics of cotton or silk; "as, *sheer* muslin;" meaning very thin, clear, or transparent.

**SHELL-BARK.** See *Shag-Bark*.

**SHERRYVALLIES.** (Fr. *Chevalier*.) Pantaloon made of thick velvet or leather, buttoned on the outside of each leg, and generally worn over other pantaloons. They are now chiefly worn by teamsters. Many years ago, when the facilities for travelling were not as great as now, and when journeys were made on horseback, *sherryvallies* were indispensable to the traveller.

**SHEW**, for *showed*. Ex. "I *shew* him the difference between black and white." This corruption is so common among all classes in the "American Athens," as to form a sort of shibboleth for distinguishing a Bostonian.

**SHILLING.** The name given, in the State of New York, to the Spanish real; in the neighboring States it is frequently called a *York shilling*. See *Federal Currency*.

**SHIMMEY.** (Fr. *Chemise*.) A woman's under garment.

The ghost was nothing but aunt Katy's *shimmey*s pinned on the line to dry, and I was a damned fool to be scared by it. — *A Tale of Sleepy Hollow*.

I love to see two hearts approximate and adhere — two souls meet and mingle into one. It is as interesting a sight to me as a *shumme*y in a wash-tub; and whispers of purity, love, harmony, happiness, and perpetual peace. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**TO SHIN.** By *shinning*, in mercantile phrase, is meant running about to one's acquaintance, to borrow money to meet the emergency of a note at bank. It is doubtless so called because, in the great hurry of picking up cash to meet the hour of three, which perchance is just at hand, the borrower, not having the fear of wheelbarrows, boxes, barrels, piles of brick, etc., before his eyes, is very apt to run furiously against them with his *shins*, the bark whereof is apt to be grievously battered off by the contact. . . . So fares it with the poor merchant, while he is looking out for an acquaintance of whom he may ask, "Any thing over?" This is an expression used by shimmers, on applying to their acquaintances for the needful; and means, Have you any money over and above the sum requisite for discharging your own notes? If so, it is of course expected that, in the way of mercantile courtesy or of a friendly reciprocity, you will oblige the *shinner* so far as to hand it over to him. It is a common way, amongst those who have business in banks, of obliging one another. If they have any thing over, they do not withhold it from their neighbor, lest in turn he should do the same towards them. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 123.

The Senator was *shinning* around, to get gold for the rascally bank-rags which he was obliged to take. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec. 13, 1845.

**TO SHIN ROUND.** To move briskly; the same as *to fly around*.

Mrs. Stowe relates the following affectionate conversation between

Cripps and Polly Skinflint soon after their marriage :

"Did n't you tell me, if I married you, I should have a nigger to oider round, just as I pleased?"

"Well, well," said Cripps, "I did n't think you'd want to go walloping him, the first thing."

"I will, if he don't *shin round*," said the virago, "and you too." — *Died*, Vol. II. p. 159.

TO SHIN UP. To *shin up* a tree or pole is to climb it by the aid of the hands and legs only.

SHIN-DIG. A blow on the shins. Southern.

SHINDY. 1. A row; a spree.

If this ere is n't that 'are singing chap agin. Ho's on a *shindy* somewhere or other every night. — *J. C. Neal, P. Ploddy*, p. 18

It appears there was a *shindy* on Monday night, for the benefit of a poor widow; and it ended, as too many of such sprees do, in a regular fight, with guns, bayonets, decanters, tumblers, etc. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

MOSE. What say you Lize for Vauxhall to-night?

LIZE. What's goin' on? Is the Vaudeville plays there?

MOSE. No, there's goin' to be a first rate *shindy*, and some of our boys will be there. — *A Glance at New York*.

You, my democratic hearers, are for the most part poor, and, therefore, ought to be careful how you cut *shindies* under the broadsword of justice. — *Dow's Sermons*.

2. A game of ball, played with a stick crooked at the end. Also the name of the stick itself. The proper and more usual name is Bandy.

3. A liking, a fancy. Comp. *Shine*, No. 2.

Father took a wonderful *shindy* to Jessie; for even old men can't help liking beauty. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 70.

Paddy had taken such a *shindy* to me, that nobody could get him to budge an inch further. — *Ibid.* p. 159.

SHINE. 1. Show, display, fine appearance. Hence, to *cut* or *make a shine*, is to make a great display.

All the boys and gals were going to camp-meetin'; so, to *make a shine* with Sally, I took her a new parasol. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

I tell you, stranger, in the settlements men pass for what they look to be, but in the backwoods for what they are; you'll find heaps of bogus money here, but bogus men can't *shine*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*

So, to *take the shine off*, is to surpass in beauty or excellence.

Next Sabbath day I slicked myself up; and I do say, when I got my fixins on, I *took the shine clean off* any specimen of human natur' in these parts. — *Quincy, Massachusetts, Whip*.

I'm sorry he did n't bring his pitch-pipe with him, jest to *take the shine off* them 'are singers. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 37.

I've seen some evening twilights that *take the shine off* every thing below, and clap on a few extra touches of their own. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

2. A fancy, liking for a person. Comp. *Shindy*, No. 3.

I took a great *shine* to the school marm, Huldah Hornbeam; though she was ten years older than I, and taller by half a yard of neck. — *McClintock, Beedle's Marriage*.

TO SHINE. 1. To get along, succeed. Western.

2. In the Southern States the deer is often hunted by torchlight. To *shine* its eyes is to make them visible by a light thrown upon them, as described in the following extract:

You see the way we does to *shine* the deer's eyes is this — we holds the pan of fire so, on the left shoulder, and carries the gun at a trail in the right hand. Well, when I wants to look for eyes, I turns round slow, and looks right at the edge of my shadow, what's made by the light behind me in the pan, and if there's a deer in gunshot of me, his eyes 'll *shine* 'zactly like two balls of fire. — *Chronicles of Pineville*, p. 169.

He often urged me to accompany him, to see how slick he could *shine* a buck's eyes. — *Ibid.* p. 162.

SHINER. (Genus, *Leuciscus*.) The popular name of the fish known to naturalists as the Dace. In different parts of the country, however, other small fish are called *shiners*, from their glittering or shining appearance. In New York a small fish of the genus *Stilbe* is known to naturalists as the New York Shiner. It is also found in the adjoining States. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

SHINGLE. A jocose term for a sign-board placed over a shop-door or office. The use of this term is said to have originated in the lumbering districts of Maine, where shingles, being the handiest plane surface, are used to write directions, etc., on, and stuck up against trees.

Doctors and dentists from the United States have stuck up their *shingles* in Mexico. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec. 24, 1848.

Several made bold to peep inside, in spite of the "No Admittance!" which frowned from a *shingle* over the door. — *Drama at Pokerville*.

TO SHINGLE. To chastise. A shingle applied *a posteriori* is a favorite New England mode of correcting a child.

SHINGLE-WEAVER. A workman who dresses shingles.

SHINNER. One who borrows money by the practice of shinning. See *To Shin*.

Four weeks ago the precious stuff  
Was rife and plenteous enough,  
And no "short *shinner*" feared rebuff,  
Who sued for pelf;  
Sure to hear "flush," or "*quantum suff.*" —  
Friend, help yourself!"

*New York Evening Post.*

**SHINPLASTER.** A cant term for a bank-note or any paper money, and especially such as has depreciated in value. This term is said to have arisen during the Revolutionary war. After the continental currency had become almost worthless, an old soldier who possessed a quantity of it, which he could not get rid of, very philosophically made use of it as plasters to a wounded leg.

The people may whistle for protection, and put up with what *shinplaster* tags they can get. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 3, 1845.

What 's become of all the specie —

Where are all the dollars gone ?

Nothing but *shinplasters* greasy

Do our meagre pockets own. — *Comic Song*.

Hope's brightest visions absquatulate with their golden promises before the least cloud of disappointment, and leave not a *shinplaster* behind. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 309.

**SHITEPOKE.** (*Butorides virescens*.) A widely distributed bird of the heron species, also called Green Heron and Fly-up-a-Creek.

**SHOEMAKE.** A very common corruption of *sumach*.

It is curious to note the changes in taste and sentiment, as marked in the disappearance of various sorts of trees. Gone are the Lombardy poplars. . . . The gude wife no longer points to her "*shoemake*" (as the sumach was formerly called), with its crimson clusters, the pride of her trim front garden. — *North Am. Rev.*, July, 1857, p. 181.

**SHOOT, or SHUTE.** 1. A passage-way on the side of a steep hill or mountain down which wood and timber are thrown or slid. There are many such on the Hudson and Mohawk rivers. In the West, the term is applied to places where a river is artificially contracted in order to increase the depth of water. In Lower Canada, a *shoot* is a place where the stream, being confined by rocks which appear above water, is shot through the aperture with great force. — *Cartwright's Labrador*, p. 14.

2. In the West, a fancy, liking for a person.

That gal was the prettyst creatur I ever took a *shute* after; her eyes jest floated about in her head like a star's shadow on a Mississippi wave. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**TO SHOOT.** To *shoot* a fall or rapid is to float down it in a vessel.

We entered the lake, from whence we are forced to transport our canoes overland to another river, which has six or seven water-falls that we commonly *shoot*. — *La Hontan's Travels in North Am.*, 1703.

**TO SHOOT ONE'S GRANDMOTHER,** is a common though vulgar phrase in New England, and means, to be mistaken, or to be disappointed; to imagine oneself the discoverer of something in which he is deceived. The common phrase is, "You've shot your granny." It is, in fact, synonymous with "You've found a mare's nest."



**SHOOTER.** A revolver. In the Western States, on the frontier, as well as in California, this murderous weapon is universally called a "five" or a "six *shooter*," according to its capacity.

**SHOOTING-IRON.** A common Western term for a rifle, or fowling-piece.

Drop your *shooting iron*, or ye'll get more than ye'll send. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas.*

A Hoosier was called upon the stand, away out West, to testify to the character of a brother Hoosier. It was as follows:

"How long have you known Bill Bushwhack?"

"Ever since he war born."

"What is his general character?"

"Letter A, No 1 — 'bove par a very great way."

"Would you believe him on oath?"

"Yes, su-ee, on or off, or any other way."

"What, in your opinion, are his qualifications to good character?"

"He's the best shot on the prairies or in the woods; he can shave the eye-winkers off of a wolf as far as a *shootin'-iron* 'll carry a ball; he can drink a quart of grog any day; and he chaws tobacco like a hoss."

So Bill Bushwhack passed muster. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

**SHORT-BOYS.** A gang of New York rowdies.

**SHORT-GOWN.** A short gown with hardly any skirt, worn by women when doing household work, as washing, etc.

**SHORT METRE.** In a short period; soon.

**SHORTS.** Small-clothes; breeches.

**SHOT IN THE NECK.** Drunk.

Mr. Shumacher informed the court that he was instructed to remonstrate against admitting the prisoners to bail in \$500, as they had made an outrageous onslaught upon officers in the discharge of their duty, and had shot Under-Sheriff Hegeman in the head.

Counselloer McCue replied, in a somewhat facetious strain, that Mr. Hegeman is often "shot in the head," and his manner produced much laughter after the remark.

Mr. Schumacher defended his client by observing that some of the prisoners' attorneys got as often "*shot in the neck*," as the Under-Sheriff did in the head. The aptness of this remark convulsed the bar, and even disturbed the gravity of the judge. — *Brooklyn Journal*, April 18, 1855.

**SHOT-GUN.** A term for a smooth-bored fowling-piece, as distinguished from a rifle.

**SHOTE, or SHOAT.** An idle, worthless fellow; as, "A poor *shote*." It is also provincial in England in this sense.

Seth Slope was what we call down East a poor *shote*, his principal business being to pick up chips, feed the hogs, etc. — *G. H. Hill, Stories.*

If you, my dear hearers, will make a proper use of your time, happiness, peace, and contentment are yours, if not, you will always be miserable *shoots*, though you live till you are as gray as woodchucks. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**SHOULDER-HITTER.** A ruffian, bully. A recent accession to blackguard nomenclature, in which we are now so rich.

Just such conduct as that exhibited by Judge R——— compelled seven thousand citizens to leave their offices, stores, shops, and factories, to rid the city of San Francisco of the pestilential presence of a band of *shoulder-hitters* and ballot-box stuffers, such as never before infested an American city. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 30, 1858.

**SHOVELLER.** (*Anas chlypeata*.) A beautiful duck, chiefly found in Texas and in the streams of the Rocky Mountains; though they are sometimes seen in our northern waters.

**SHUCKS.** The outer husk or shell of the walnut, chestnut, etc.; or the husk of Indian corn. In England, the word is applied to pods as well as husks; as, *pea-shucks*. At the South, where the word is most in use, it is also applied to the shells of oysters. *Not worth shucks* is a Southern expression, meaning good for nothing. At the South the term is also applied to the shells of oysters.

If them thar is all he's got to offer, he ain't worth *shucks*; and if you don't lick him, you ain't worth *shucks* neither. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

They had three or four hounds, and one great big yellow cow, what was n't worth *shucks* to trail — *May, Jones's Countship*, p. 48.

The bear did n't seem to care *shucks* for him; for he sot the old rifle agin the saplin, and walked off on his hund legs jest like any human. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

**TO SHUCK.** To *shuck* corn is to strip off the husks, called in the South "shucks," from Indian corn.

Hence, to *shuck off* one's coat, is to strip or peel it off, as for a fight.

He 'd get as mad as all wrath, and charge like a ram at a gate-post, and the first thing you knowed, he 'd *shuck off* his coat to fight. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

**SHUCKING, or CORN-SHUCKING.** See *Husking*.

And when the lamp is lighted  
In the long November days,  
And lads and lasses mingle  
At *shucking* of the maize;  
When pies of smoking pumpkin  
Upon the table stand,  
And bowls of black molasses  
Go round from hand to hand;  
When slap-jacks, maple-sugared,  
Are hissing in the pan,  
And cider, with a dash of gin,  
Foams in the social can;

. . . . .  
 With laughter and with weeping  
 Then shall they tell the tale,  
 How Colt his foeman quartered,  
 And died within the jail

*Bon Gaultier, Lay of Mr. Colt.*

**TO SHUT UP.** 1. To stop talking; to hold one's tongue. A vulgar expression, for which *to dry up* is now sometimes substituted.

Jones was singing, "'T is the Star Spangled Banner;" but was soon made to *shut up*, and Leviller's name was called. — *Pickings from the Picayune.*

Did you ever see a marmaid? Well, then, I reckon you'd best *shut up*; 'cause I have — and marmen too, and marmisses — *Burton, Waggeries.*

The musician suddenly "*shut up*," and, after many suspicious sights at Charley, jumped over to the side of the lady, and spoke a few words in his own language with more than customary rapidity. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

"Look here, boys," said the preacher to a crowd which had gathered round, laughing and betting with slang oaths and imprecations, "None of this at the camp-meeting! This is the Lord's ground here, so *shut up* your swearing and don't fight." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 312.

2. To cause to stop talking; to reduce to silence.

"I order you again to shut up," said the watchman. "There ain't no two ways about it — you must either shut up yourself, or I'll *shut you up* in a winking." — *N. O. Picayune.*

**SHUTE.** See *Shoot*.

**TO SHY.** To throw a light substance, as a flat stone, or a shell, with a careless jerk. And so in England.

Just to make matters lively, I headed up alongside of Molly, and *shied* a few soft things at her, such as asking how she liked bar steaks cooked, and if Jim warn't equal in the elbow to a mad panter's tail, and such amusin' conversation. — *Robb, Squatter Life.*

**TO SHY AROUND.** To hang about.

I was kind of *shying round* and looking at the everlastin' sight of books, when he came in. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 1.

**SHYSTER.** A term applied to a set of men who hang about the Police Courts of New York and other large cities, and practise in them as lawyers, but who, in many cases, have never been admitted to the bar. They are men who have served as policemen, turnkeys, sheriff's officers, or in any capacity by which they have become familiar with criminals and criminal courts.

The miserable creature who has fallen into the watchman's clutches may make his escape if he has money; but if not, he must go to quod and wait next day for the visits of the *shyster* lawyers — a sett of turkey buzzards, whose touch is pollution and whose breath is pestilence. — *New York in Sluces. The Tombs.*

When a man or woman is thrown into prison, a *shyster* leech gets access to him,

and extorts from him his last cent under the pretence of obtaining his liberation. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The appearance of a large number of abandoned women in the Police Court, drew together a large concourse of people. The *shysters*, or Tombs lawyers, were on hand, and sought to intercede for their clients; but the magistrates would listen to no appeals. — *Ibid.* March 13, 1857.

The Prison Association held its monthly meeting last night. The report was rich in incidents and developments about the skimmers, sharks, and *shysters* of the Tombs. — *New York Express*.

**SICK.** Afflicted with disease, ill in health.

The word "*sick*" is used in New England in the same sense as it was in the time of Shakspeare, or when the liturgy of the Church of England was composed. — *Lyell's Second Visit*, Chapter IX.

**SIDEWINDER:** A heavy blow with the fist. New York.

Mayor Wood is just the man to seize and improve in an inaugural address the opportunity of dealing Recorder Smith what the boys call a *sidewinder*. — *New York Tribune*.

**SIDE-WIPE.** A heavy blow with the fist. Southern.

Arch would fetch him a *side wipe* on the head, and knock him into the middle of next week. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

**SIDE-WALK.** The walk for foot-passengers on each side of the carriage-way in a street or road. In England it is called the "pavement."

As there is but very little mud at any time in Copiapo, and few suitable pebble stones, only a street or two has been paved; nor has the municipal council given much thought to the necessity of *side-walks*. — *Gilliss's Chile*, Vol. I. p. 252.

**SIDINGS.** Wedged-shaped boards used for the sides and roofs of houses.

**TO SIDLE OUT.** To get out sideways; to back out. Southern.

If he tried to *sidle out* of the quarrel, Arch would get as mad as wrath, an' swar, an' curse, an' run — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

**SIDLING.** A place at which to turn off on a railroad to wait for a passing engine. The English term is *siding*.

**SIERRA.** (Span.) A ridge of mountains. The term is universally applied to mountain ridges in New Mexico and California.

At night, above their rocky bed  
They saw the stars march slow;  
The wild *Sierra* overhead,  
The desert's death below. — *Whittier*.

The *sierras*, which surround the plain, teem with the precious metals; . . . one person, without capital or machinery, derives a considerable income from a mine which produces gold, silver, lead, and sulphur from the same *sierra*. — *Ruxton's Mexico*, p. 131.

**SIGHT.** 1. A great many; a great deal. An old meaning of the word, still colloquial in England. "A *sight* of people," is a great multitude; "my husband is a *sight* handsomer than yours," i. e. much handsomer. *Sight* is used in most of the Northern and Eastern, and *heap* in the Southern and Western States.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd a powerful *sight* sooner go into retracy among the red, wild aborigines of our wooden country, nor consent to that bill, — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 74.

2. In North Carolina, the distance that can be seen on a road is called a *sight*.

**SIGN.** In the unsettled parts of the far West, the traces of the recent presence of men or animals are called *signs*, or more technically, *sign*. One hears of Indian *sign*, cow *sign*, bear *sign*, hog *sign*, etc.

"What's the *sign* out on the plains?"

"War-party of Rapahos passed Squirel at sundown yesterday, and nearly raised my animals. *Sign*, too, of more on the left fork of boiling Spring." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

It is a mistake to suppose that the negro brain is incapable of that acute reasoning which constitutes a cunning hunter. I have known black men who could read "*sign*" or lift a trail with as much intuitive quickness as either red or white. — *Capt. Mayne Reid, Osceola*, p. 113

Several deer jumped out of the bottom when we entered, and on the banks of the river I saw some fresh beaver *sign* — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 173.

The men scoured the country around in search for the missing mules, and having seen Indian *sign* keeping near us for miles, they believed the animals had been taken. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*.

Our Delawares report that they have seen numerous fresh buffalo *signs*, and that we shall soon come upon the herds. — *Capt. Marcy, Report on the Red River*.

**TO SIGN OFF.** To release a debtor by agreeing to accept whatever he offers to pay; to give a receipt in full of all demands. An expression common among merchants.

**TO SIGNALIZE.** To communicate information by means of signals or telegraph; to signal. An absurd use of the word.

The ship was *signalized* about eight o'clock this morning, and came up the harbor in fine style. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.* Jan. 17, 1848.

**SILK-GRASS.** See *Bear-Grass*.

**SILVER FOX.** (*Canis argentatus*.) A black fox, with white hairs interspersed on the back. Like the Cross-fox, this variety is rare. They are found in the United States and Canada. Their skins are used for ladies' muffs, and bring a high price.

**SILVER GAR.** See *Bill-Fish*.

**SILVER GRAYS.** This term originated in the State of New York, and was applied to the conservative portion of the Whig party. At a political convention in that State, certain measures proposed not being agreeable to many, they at once withdrew. As they left the meeting, it was observed that many were men whose locks were silvered by age, which drew forth the remark from some one present, "There go the *silver grays*!" The term remains, and is the only one now used to distinguish one branch of the Whig party.

**TO SIMILATE.** To put on the appearance of that which does not really belong to the subject.

And this holds true both of actions which *simulate* the intellect, and those which *simulate* the moral sense, such as gratitude and shame in a dog. — *Tappan's Psychology*.

**'SIMMON.** A contraction for *persimmon*; as in the Southern adage, "The longest pole knocks down the 'simmons."

**SINGED CAT.** An epithet applied to a person whose appearance does him injustice.

Who would have thought that milksop of a lawyer would have done so well? Howsoever you can't judge a fellow from his looks. After all, that's a fact; for that critter is like a *singed cat*, better nor he seems. — *Sam Slick, The Old Judge*, Vol I p 44

Paison Brownlow has found an antagonist in the Rev. Mr. Pryne, of Cincinnati. So when the Tennessee paison visits Philadelphia they are to have it! We reckon there'll be fun; as a Cincinnati paper says Pryne is a perfect *singed cat*! — *New Orleans Bulletin*, May, 1858.

**SINK.** See *Battery*.

**SINK-HOLE, or SINK.** A hole or depression in limestone lands where the waters sink and are lost. These places are common in the Middle and Western States. See *Cavern limestone*.

A hunter, while in the pursuit of a deer, fell into one of those deep, funnel-shaped pits, formed on the prairies by the settling of waters after heavy rains, and known by the name of *sink-holes*. — *Irving, Tour on the Prairies*, p. 147.

Leaving the Pecos, we stopped to look at some limestone *sinks* near the road. The earth and stones had caved in, or sunk, in spots varying from ten to thirty feet in diameter — *Bartlett's Pers Narrative*, Vol. I p. 110.

**SIRS.** This plural is adopted by many persons in commercial correspondence in beginning their letters. Instead of the word *gentlemen*, addressed to a firm, they write, *Dear Sirs*.

*Sirs*, said the umpire, cease your pother. — *Chamelion*

**SIRREE.** "Yes, *sirree*," and, "No, *sirree*," for "Yes sir," and "No sir."  
This vulgar slang, which originated in New York, is now heard throughout

the Union. Sometimes, as if not already puerile enough, the word "*bob*" is added, as, "*Yes, sirree, bob.*"

While hearing a case, the attorney stated in his plea that he believed one of the jurors was intoxicated. The judge, addressing the man alluded to, said :

"Sir, are you drunk ?"

The juror, straightening himself up, in a bold half-defiant tone, replied, "*No, sirree, bob !*"

"Well," said the judge, "I fine you five dollars for the '*ree*' and ten for the '*bob*.'" — *Baltimore Sun*, March 30, 1857.

**SISS and SISSY.** Contractions for *sister*, often used in addressing girls, even by their parents.

**TO SISS.** To hiss. A colloquialism also used in England.

**SISTERN**, for *sisters*. A vulgar pronunciation sometimes heard from uneducated preachers at the West.

Brethurn and *sisturn*, it's a powerful great work, this here preaching of the gospel, as the great apostle himself allows in them words of hissin what's jest come into my mind ; for I never knowed what to preach till I rns up. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**SITIO.** (Span.) A Spanish superficial measure, used in the States and Territories of Spanish origin. The *sitio* is a league of land of 5,000 varas, and is equal to 4,428 English acres.

**SIXPENCE.** The New York name for the Spanish half-real. See *Federal Currency*.

**SIX-SHOOTER.** A revolver with six chambers. See *Shooter*.

**TO SIZZLE.** To hiss from the action of fire. — *Forby*.

From the ends of the wood the sap fries and drips on the *sizzling* coals below, and flies off in angry steam. — *Margaret*, p. 159.

**SKEARY, or SKEERY.** See *Scary*.

**SKEARSOME, or SKEERSOME.** See *Scare some*.

**SKEEZICKS.** A mean, contemptible fellow. Western.

At a Republican meeting in Indiana, the other day, a speaker named Long responded to a loud call and took the stand. But a big, strapping fellow persisted in crying out in a stentorian voice, "Long, Long !" This caused a little confusion ; but, after some difficulty in making himself heard, the president succeeded in stating that Mr. Long, the gentleman honored by the call, was now addressing them. "Oh, he be d—d !" replied the fellow ; "he's the little *skeezicks* that told me to call for Long !" This brought down the house. — (*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, Nov. 1858.

**SKID.** A piece of light timber, from ten to twenty feet in length, upon which heavier timber is rolled or slid from place to place.

**SKILTS.** A sort of brown tow trowsers formerly worn in New England, very large, and reaching just below the knees. In Dorsetshire, England, half-boots are called *skilty-boots*.

The lad's *skilts*, through which were thrust his lean dry shanks, gave him a semblance to a peasant of Gascony on stilts. — *Margaret*, p. 22.

**SKIMPING.** Scanty, as the pattern of a dress. Used also in the south of England.

**SKINNER.** See *Shyster*.

**SKIP-JACK.** See *Blue Fish*.

**SKIPPER.** The cheese-mite. Also called in England the Cheese-Hopper.

**SKIPPERY.** Abounding in cheese-mites.

With the opening of spring, insects, caterpillars, and reptiles will start from their hiding-places, and the earth appear as animated as a plate of *skippery* cheese or the carcass of a dead horse in dog days. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 258.

**TO SKITE.** To *skite about* is to go running about.

**SKUNK.** 1. (*Mephitis mephitica*.) A small, carnivorous American quadruped, allied to the weasel and badger, and which, on being irritated, emits a very fetid secretion. The name is from the Abenaki *seganku*.

Old men, you can't conceal the sad changes time has wrought upon you. You may scent your persons with the sweetest perfume; but they will no more compare with the rich fragrance that youth and beauty emit, than the atmosphere which surrounds a wounded *skunk* can equal the odor of an orange grove. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 244.

2. A vile or good for nothing fellow.

Now, Tom, you *skunk*, this is the third time you've forgot to set on that switch. — *Notes on Canada, etc., Blackwood*.

**TO SKUNK.** 1. To utterly defeat. In games of chance, if one of the players fails to make a point, he is said to be *skunked*. A presidential candidate who fails to secure one electoral vote is also *skunked*.

2. A student who leaves college without settling up, is said to *skunk* his bills.

**SKUNK BLACKBIRD.** The common marsh blackbird, so called in the rural districts of New England, New York, and Canada West. See *Boblink*.

We followed that old Polyglott, the *skunk blackbird*, and heard him describe the way they talked at the winding up of the Tower of Babel. — *H. W. Beecher, Star Papers*, p. 192.

**SKUNK CABBAGE.** (*Symplocarpus foetidus*.) A strong-scented, repulsive plant, exceedingly deserving of the name it bears. The odor depends on a volatile principle, not separable by distillation. This plant has been



found useful in asthma and some other diseases. — *Bigelow's Plants of Boston.*

The green, tender blades of youth, the ripened stems of manhood, and the blooming flowers of beauty, all fall indiscriminately before the fell stroke of time, and wither together like *slunk cabbage*, clover-heads, and lilies. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 183.

**SKUNKHEAD.** The popular name, on the sea-coast, of the Pied Duck (*Fuligula labradora*) of ornithologists. — *Nat. Hist. of New York.*

**SKY-LARKING.** A term used by seamen for games or tricks with each other in the rigging, tops, etc., of ships; and hence transferred to any kind of rough play.

The New York Courier and Enquirer, in speaking of an election for officers of the Mercantile Library, says:

There was a considerable amount of *skylarking* carried on from sunset until midnight in the halls and passages of the building, hats were smashed, and members tumbled on the floor; but everybody preserved good humor, and even the defeated candidates yielded to the contagious influence of merriment and hilarity. — May 19, 1858.

**SKY-RACKET.** The vulgar pronunciation of *sky-rocket*.

**TO SLAB OFF.** To throw aside as useless, like the outside piece of a log when sawn up into planks, which is called a *slab*.

You must take notice that I am *slab'd off* from the election, and am nothing but a "voter;" and this gives me a right to dictate to the rest. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 212.

**SLAB-SIDED.** Having perpendicular sides, wall-sided.

To get any thing to eat was only to be accomplished by taking a stand some one or two hours before meal time, and this was invariably done by a *slab-sided* genius from the hungry side of the Granite State Hills. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

"My dear girls," said the preacher, "I like to see a small waist as well as anybody; and females with hour-glass shapes suit my fancy better than your Dutch-churn, soap-barrel, *slab-sided* sort of figures; but I don't want to give the credit to coisets." — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 200.

Jack Downing says that Maine is the middle and kernel of real Yankeeism; Rhode Island and Connecticut point to each other as the focus of the article; while the Massachusetts man will tell you that the real *slab-sided* whittler is indigenous to Vermont and New Hampshire. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**SLANG-WHANGER.** This curious word is defined by Mr. Pickering as signifying "a writer or noisy talker, who makes use of that sort of political or other cant, which amuses the rabble, and is called by the vulgar name of *slang*." The word frequently occurs in Paulding's *Salmagundi*; but it is now seldom heard.

"More availability," and the "available candidate," are not the phrases with which the *slang-whangers* of all sides assail the Philadelphia Convention. — *New York Battery*.

Parson Brownlow is a local preacher and editor in Knoxville, Tennessee, and one of the *slang-whangers* of the South-west. — *Harper's Magazine*, Dec. 1857.

**SLANG-WHANGING.** Political cant.

Part of the customary *slang-whanging* against all other nations which is habitual to the English press. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Oct. 10, 1845.

If the word is, as has been supposed, of American origin, it has been adopted in the mother country.

What else ? No part I take in party fray,  
With tropes from Billingsgate's *slang-whanging* Tartars,  
I fear no pope — and let Ernest play  
At Fox and Goose with Fox's Martyrs !

*Hood, Ode to Ray Wilson.*

**SLANT.** A side blow. A slang word.

**SLANTENDICULAR.** Aslant ; oblique. A factitious vulgarism.

**SLANTENDICULARLY, or SLANTSHWISE.** Obliquely.

Pony got mad and sent the Elder right slap over his head *slantendicularly*, on the broad of his back into the river. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 28.

**SLAP-JACK.** A pancake. A country girl formerly was not considered eligible for marriage until she could make a shirt and toss a slap-jack fairly right into the middle of the pan. In England they are called *flap-jacks*.

To the Van Nests of Kinderhook, if report may be believed, are we indebted for the invention of *slap-jacks*, or buckwheat cakes. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

**SLASHES.** Swampy or wet lands overgrown with bushes. Southern and Western.

Although the inner lands want the benefit of game (which, however, no pond or *slash* is without), yet even they have the advantage of wild-turkeys, etc. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book II.

Between this and Edenton there are many whortleberry *slashes*, which afford a convenient harbor for wolves and foxes. — *Westover Papers*, p. 28.

**SLAT.** A narrow piece of board or timber, used to fasten together large pieces ; as, the *slats* of a cart or chair. — *Webster*. Mr. Wright says the word is used in Northamptonshire to denote "the flat step of a ladder."

**TO SLAT.** A word of uncertain derivation, signifying to throw down with violence. — *Toone's Glossary*.

*Slatted* his brains out, then soused him in the briny sea. — *Old Play, The Malcontents*.

With that, I handed him my axe, and he *slatted* about the chamber a spell. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 200.

Suz alive ! but warn't my dander up to hear myself called a-flat ? down I *slat* the basket and upshot all the berries. — *Lafayette Chronicle*.

Aunt Nancy would retire to the kitchen, and, taking up the dipper, would *slat* round the hot water from a kettle. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, May 15, 1846.

**SLAVE LABOR.** The labor of slaves.

But when I hear you avowing that *slave labor* shall not come in competition with free labor, . . . I am led to infer that when the throat-cutting tragedy comes off, you hope to see the whites the victors. — *A Voice from the South*, p. 19.

**SLAVEOCRAT.** A slaveholder.

**SLAVEOCRACY.** The owners of slaves, as a class; slaveholders.

Arnold Buffum was the next talker [at the meeting of the National Reformers]. The burden of his song was the Constitution — Slavery — Free Soil — an anecdote or two — and an exhortation to curb the *slaveocracy*. — *N. Y. Express*, Sept. 4, 1848.

To this end the entire influence and patronage of the government, its civil, military, and moral power, are all directed; and along-side of these, prominent and threatening, stands the bullying of the *slaveocracy*, boastingly pointing to the bowie-knife, the pistol, and the bludgeon, and impudently taunting the entire North with cowardice. — *N. Y. Courier and Eng.*, May 27, 1856.

**SLAVE POWER.** The political power of slaveholders; the body of slaveholders.

**SLAVE STATE.** A State in which negro slavery exists.

Either the cotton and rice fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts for legitimate merchandise alone, or else the rye fields and wheat fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men. It is the failure to apprehend this great truth that induces so many unsuccessful attempts at final compromise between the *slave* and free *States*, and it is the existence of this great fact that renders all such pretended compromises, when made, vain and ephemeral." — *Speech of Hon. W. H. Seward*, Oct. 1858.

**SLAZY.** A corrupt pronunciation of *sleazy* or *sleezy*; i. e. weak, wanting substance; thin; flimsy. It is also pronounced so in some parts of England.

**SLED.** See *Ferry Flat*.

**TO SLEEP.** Sometimes used as an active verb; as, "This steamboat can *sleep* three hundred passengers," i. e. can furnish sleeping accommodations for them. We have heard of a landlady who said "she could *eat* fifty people in her house, although she could not *sleep* half the number."

**SLEIGH.** A vehicle moved on runners, and greatly used in America for transporting persons or goods on snow or ice. — *Webster*. In England it is called a *sledge*. During the winter of 1844, after a fall of snow in London, an English newspaper observed that "the Queen was making

preparations for *sledge-driving*," which in America few would understand to mean that Her Majesty was about taking a *sleigh-ride*.

**SLEIGH-BELL.** A small hollow ball, made of bell-metal, having a slit in it that passes half round its circumference, and containing a small, solid ball of a size not to escape. These bells are fastened to leathern straps, which pass round the necks or bodies of the horses. They produce a musical and lively sound, which is useful to give warning of the approaching vehicle, and is pleasing to the ear.

**SLEIGH-RIDE.** Used both as a noun and as a verb.

Men do not derive the right to do good from the Thirty-nine Articles, nor need they go to the Westminster Confession for liberty to recover the intemperate, set free the bond, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, educate the ignorant, and give *sleigh-rides* to beggars' children that never before laughed and cuddled in a buffalo-robe. — *Rev. H. W. Beecher*.

In winter we *sleigh-ride*, coast, skate, and snow-ball. — *Margaret*.

**SLEIGHING.** 1. The state of the snow which admits of running sleighs. — *Webster*. As, "good *sleighbing*," "bad *sleighbing*;" and in the winter when there is no snow, we say there is "no *sleighbing*."

2. The act of riding in a sleigh. — *Webster*.

**SLEWED.** Tipsy; drunk. A common expression in the United States, and also used in Yorkshire, England.

"Never go to bed," said a father to his son, "without knowing something you did not know in the morning" "Yes, sir," replied the youth, "I went to bed *slewed* last night — did n't dream of such a thing in the morning." — *Whig Almanac*, 1855.

**SLICK.** 1. The popular pronunciation of *sleek*, and so written by some authors. — *Webster*. It is also used adverbially in vulgar language, like many other adjectives.

"This word," says Todd, "was formerly written *slick*; and *slick* or *slicken* is still our northern word." It is also provincial in Kent, while, in other parts of England, the verb to *slick*, to comb or make sleek the hair, is provincial. — *Holloway's Prov. Dict.*

Her flesh tender as is a chicke,

With bent browes, smooth and *slike*. — *Chaucer, Rom. of the Rose*.

That the bodie thereof is not all over smoothe and *slicke* (as we see in birds' eggs), is shewed by good arguments. — *Holland, Trans. of Pliny*.

The railroad company, out of sheer parsimony, have neglected to fence in their line, which goes *slick* through the centre of your garden. — *Blackwood's Mag.*, July, 1847.

But you've all read in Æsop, or Phædrus, or Gay,

How a tortoise and hare ran together one day;

How the hare, making play,

"Progress'd right *slick* away,"

As them tarnation chaps, the Americans, say.

*Ingoldsby Legends*, Vol. I. p. 241.

Well! one comfort is, that there ain't many folks to see how bad you look here in the woods! We ain't used to seem' folks look so dreadful *slick*, — so it don't matter. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 114.

Then here 's to women, then to liquor;  
There 's nothing swimmin' can be *slicker*.

*Boatman's Song.*

Singin' is a science which comes pretty tough at first; but it goes *slick* afterwards. — *Peter Cram of Tinnecum, Knuck. Mag.*, 1841.

The Senate could not pass Mr. Stevenson through for England. The reason was, he was a-going through right *slick*, till he came to his coat pockets, and they were so full of papers written by Ritchie, that he stuck fast, and hung by the flaps. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 120.

I've hearn tell that courtin' is the hardest thing in the world to begin, though it goes on so *slick* afterwards. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II. p. 18.

Nobody can waltz real *slick*, unless they have the spring-halt in one leg, as horses sometimes have. — *Dow's Sermons*.

## 2. A smooth place in the water where fish abound. New England.

You have seen on the surface of the sea those smooth places which fishermen and sailors call *slicks*. Our boatman said they were caused by the blue fish chopping up their prey [the menhaden], and that the oil from this butchery, rising to the surface, makes the *slick*. Whatever the cause may be, we always found fish plenty whenever we came to a *slick*. — *Daniel Webster, Priv. Cor.*, Vol. II. p. 332.

**SLICK AS A WHISTLE.** A proverbial simile, in common use throughout the United States. To do any thing as *slick as a whistle*, is to do it very smoothly, perfectly, adroitly.

You know I told you in my last letter I was going to bring Miss Mary up to the chalk at Christmas. Well, I done it as *slick as a whistle*. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 94.

**SLICK AS GREASE.** Another classical expression, conveying the same idea as the foregoing; sometimes varied into *slick as ile* (oil).

**TO SLICK UP.** To make sleek; to make fine.

Mrs. Flyer was *slicked up* for the occasion, in the snuff-colored silk she was married in. — *Mrs. Clavers, A New Honee*, p. 211.

The house was all *slicked up* as neat as a pin, and the things in every room all sot to rights. — *Maj. Downing, May Day*, p. 43.

The caps most in vogue then were made of dark, coarse, knotted twine, like a cabbage-net, worn, as the wives said, to save *slicking up*, and to hide dirt. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 72.

**TO SLIDE.** To go, be gone, be off. See also *To let Slide*, p. 241.

We have fought the field together,  
We have struggled side by side;  
Broken is the band that held us, —  
We must cut our sticks and *slide*. — *R. S. Willis, Student's Song*.

**SLIMSY.** Flimsy; frail. Most frequently applied to cotton or other cloth.

The building is old and *slumsy*. — *Margaret*, p. 329.

SLING. A drink composed of equal parts of rum and water sweetened. —  
*Rush*. *Gin-slings* are more commonly drunk now.

To SLING. Sometimes used vulgarly instead of *to swing*.

We swung round the wharf; and when the captain told the people who I was, they *slung* their hats and gave three cheers. — *Crockett*, *Tour Down East*, p. 37.

SLINK. A sneaking fellow.

I despise a *slink*. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 139.

SLINKY. Thin; lank.

SLIP. 1. The opening between wharves or in a dock. — *Webster*.

This word is peculiar to New York, where we have *Peck Slip*, *Burling Slip*, *Old Slip*, *Coenties Slip*, etc.

2. In New England, a long seat or narrow pew in a church. — *Webster*. When there is a door, they are called pews; when without doors, and free to all, *slips*. This, I believe, is the difference between them.

3. Milk turned with rennet, etc., before the whey separates from the curd.

SLIP-GAP. See *Gap*.

SLIP-SLOPS. Old shoes turned down at the heel. Southern.

The term is probably English; at all events, a loose shoe or slipper is called a *slip-shoe* in Norfolk.

SLIPE. A distance.

Well, I've got a long *slipe* off from my steamboat, the *Hunter*; and I had better look up the captain. — *Crockett*, *Tour*, p. 145.

SLIPPER-DOWN. A vulgar name in some parts of Connecticut for hasty-pudding. The etymology is obvious.

SLIVER. A piece of any substance, as wood torn or split off. This word is, in this country, commonly pronounced *sliver*; but the English orthoepists all pronounce it *sliver*. — *Worcester*.

In New England this word is used as a verb as well as a noun.

As there was nothin' else to get hold of, I just *slivered* a great big bit off the leg of the chair, and made a tooth-pick of it. — *Sam Slick in England*.

To LET SLIVER. To let slip, let fly, i. e. to fire.

Old Yelp smelled the bar; and as soon as I clapped peeper on him, I *let sliver*, when the varmint dropped. — *Robb*, *Squatter Life*

SLOPE. A running away, elopement, escape.

Now Sol Wheelwright, I regret to say, was a rowdy,  
 Who played all-fours, and kept late hours at the grog shop,

And, forgetting his debts and the girl he had just got engaged to, He left Mudfog, made a *slope*, and went off to Texas.

*Ballad of Blonzelinda.*

**TO SLOPE.** To run away. A common vulgarism.

As the officers approached, some hid themselves in their ovens, some under their beds; but a majority *sloped* without hats, shoes, or coats. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Nov. 3, 1845.

The editor of the Eagle cannot pay his board bill, and fears are entertained that he will *slope* without liquidating the debt. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

The constables appeared with attachments; each person interested seized his own goods, while the master and clerk *sloped* to parts unknown. — *Baltimore Patriot*, July 10, 1846.

The instant an English mob sees two dragoons coming, they jist run like a flock of sheep afore a couple of bull-dogs, and *slope* off, properly skeered. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 27.

**SLOSHING ABOUT.** A Western term, which is said to have been thus explained by a witness who was testifying in court relative to a row.

"Come, witness, what had Mr. Saltonstall to do with the affair?"

"Well, I've told you, they clinched and paired off, but Saltonstall he jest kept *sloshin' about*."

"That is n't legal evidence, my good fellow, in the shape you put it. Tell us what you mean by *sloshun' about*."

"I'll try," answered the witness. "You see Brewer and Sykes clinched and fouted. That's in a legal form, ain't it?"

"Oh yes!" said the judge, "go on."

"Abney and Blackman then pitched into one another, and Blackman bit off a piece of Abney's lip, — that's legal too, ain't it?"

"Procced!"

"Simpson, and Bill Stones, and Murry was all together on the ground, a bitin', goug'n', and kickin' one another, — that's legal too, is it?"

"Very! but go on."

"And Saltonstall made it his business to walk backward and forward through the crowd, with a big stick in his hand, and knock down every loose man in the crowd. That's what I call *sloshin' about*." — *Cauro (Illinois) Times*, Nov. 1854.

**SLUMP.** A favorite dish in New England, called an *apple slump*, is made by placing raised bread or dough around the sides of an iron pot, which is then filled with apples and sweetened with molasses. It is also called Apple Pot-Pie, or Pandowdy; and in Pennsylvania, an Apple Cobbler.

**SLUNG SHOT.** An offensive weapon formed of two leaden or iron bullets fastened together by a piece of rope five or six inches long. One bullet is held in the hand, while the other hangs outside by the rope, which passes between the second and third fingers. A blow from it on the head will fell the strongest man. It is also called a Billy.

About eight o'clock in the evening two men entered the store of C. J. Jansen & Co., and, professing to be purchasers, asked to see some blankets. Mr. Jansen,

who was alone in the store, was in the act of producing the articles, when he was violently struck with a *slung shot*, and fell insensible on the floor. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 314.

**SLUNK.** Produced immaturally, as the young of a beast; slink. This form of the word is also used in the eastern counties of England.

A butcher in Cincinnati was arrested for killing a dog, dressing it like mutton, and offering it for sale. Two witnesses testified before the court that they had known the prisoner to purchase a *slunk* calf three days old, and offer its meat for sale. — *Newspaper*.

**SMALL POTATOES.** An epithet applied to persons or things, and signifying petty, mean, contemptible; as, "He is very *small potatoes*." *Small potatoes*, except for the feeding of hogs and cattle, are worthless; hence the expression as applied to men. It is sometimes put into the more emphatic form of *small potatoes and few in a hill*.

It's *small potatoes* for a man-of-war to be hunting poor game like us little fore-and-aft vessels. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 38.

I took to attendin' Baptist meetin'; because the Presbyterian minister here is such *small potatoes*, that 't want edifyin' to sit under his preachin'. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 188.

Give me an honest old soldier for the Presidency — whether a Whig or Democrat — and I will leave your *small potato* politicians and pettyfogging lawyers to those who are willing to submit the destiny of this great nation to such hands. — *N. Y. Herald*, Dec. 13, 1846.

**SMART.** 1. Quick, active; keen, shrewd, intelligent. Ex. "That's a *smart*, lively lad of yours;" "He is a *smart* business man." These are the senses in which the word is most commonly used in this country; while in England it now usually has the meaning of showy or witty.

I say stranger, that's a powerful *smart* looking chunk of a pony you've got atwixt your legs thar; but ponies is mighty onsartin. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

New Haven, with its shady elms,  
And Hartford, with its charter, —  
Connecticut, my native State!

Say, can you find a *smarter*? — *Alln. Home Ballads*.

I expect we free born Americans is the *smartest* people under the sun; we do know a heap — that is, some on us — but we might know a cord more ef we warnt too powerful *smart* to learn. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

2. In the South and West the word is frequently used (as it also is in the east of England) in the sense of considerable; and especially in such phrases as "right *smart*," "*smart* chance," "*smart* sprinkle," etc.

**SMART CHANCE.** 1. A good opportunity; a fair chance. A vulgar expression.

He has a *smart chance* of getting a better character. — *S. Slick in England*, ch. IX.

Says I, "Friend Wolfe," for I seed there was a *smart chance* of a 10w, "play I won't." — *S. Slick, 3d Ser.*, p. 117.



2. A good deal; a large quantity. A *smart chance* of any thing means a considerable quantity; *quite a smart chance*, or a *right smart chance*, means more; and a *mighty smart chance* is the superlative, and means a very large quantity. These singular expressions, used in the Southern and Western States, are never heard in the Eastern. *Right smart* is often used alone; as, "We have had fine weather this season, and I've *right smart* of peaches," or "*right smart* peaches."

"There's a *smart chance* of cigars there in the bar, stranger, if you'll try some of them," said one of the Hoosiers. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*.

We had a "*smart chance*" of snow on Thursday; it fell during the day to the depth of two inches, which makes a considerable snow-storm in this part of the world. — *Wilmington, N. C., Commercial*, Dec. 10.

I thought of the new wagon that we wanted, and such a *smart chance* of other things about the farm. — *Simms, The Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 85.

'How is the old woman and the boys?'

Considerable sassy, only thar's been a *smart chance* of ague down in our neck of the woods. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

I don't pretend to say, stranger, what sort of cattle you have in your country; but I reckon there's a *right smart chance* of self-conceit among you Yankees. — *Letter from the South, N. Y. Journ. of Com.*

A correspondent of the New York Evening Post, in giving the peculiarities of diction prevalent near Galena, in Illinois, says:

If you should go into the house where the ladies are making a fine quilt, and say to them, "Ladies, you are making a fine quilt," they would reply, "Yes, but it takes a heap of truck and *right smart* thread."

**SMART PIECE.** A good bit; a considerable time.

The first time, stranger, that I ever see Charley Birkham was a *smart piece* ago — nigh on to a year or so arter I left up thar in Tennessee, whar I was raised. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**SMART SPRINKLE.** A good deal; a good many. Used in the interior of the Western States.

In answer to some query about snakes, our landlord said there was a *smart sprinkle* of rattlesnakes on Red Run, and a powerful nice day to sun themselves. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 85.

I had n't sot more 'n a minit when I heerd a snort, and a roar, and a growl, and a right *smart sprinklin'* of fast travellin', all mixed up together. — *Western Tale, Smoking a Grizzly Bear*.

It is too late for me to commence plainin' my language, though I once had a pretty *smart sprinklin'* of larnin'; but I have always thought when I was young I collapsed a flue, and a right smart chance of it leaked out. — *Tale of the Berkshire Pig*.

**SMARTNESS.** Shrewdness; keenness in a trade.

It is a great error to suppose that the New England States continue to deserve their character for "*smartness*." Their day is past. Wooden nutmegs and bass-wood hams were well enough some years ago; but that sort of business at best was

beneath the dignity of rascals who "go in" for their hundreds of thousands, and whose operations ruin households instead of merely giving them indigestion. The keen fellows now live in the West — *New York Herald*, Sept. 11, 1857.

**SMASHER.** A low word denoting any thing very large or grand of the kind. It is of English origin.

Put up your benefit for that night; and if you don't have a *smasher*, with at least six wreaths, say I don't understand managing the theatres. — *Field, Drama at Pokenville*

Them's the right kind o' parties, where there are married folks and young folks together. Mrs Knight is going to give such a one, a regular *smasher*, and she's able to do it — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**SMEAR-CASE.** (Dutch, *smeer-kaas*.) A preparation of milk made to be spread on bread, whence its name; otherwise called Cottage-Cheese. In New York it is called Pot-cheese.

**SMILE.** A drink, dram. A cant word of recent introduction.

A study young German, with a buxom lass of recent importation, called upon an alderman to be married. . . . When the ceremony had been performed, the alderman smiled upon the twain; and thereupon the "crowd" was invited into the Fifth Ward Hotel, and one general *smile* entirely absorbed the fee. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 31, 1855.

**SMILING.** Drinking, tippling.

A writer from the White Sulphur Springs says:

Last night a young man here was borne to another world on the wings of spirits — that is, died of *mania-a-potu*. Another impetuous youth is said to have dosed himself with too much morphine, through the effects of too much love or folly. They say, too, he is dead. There are many more fast boys about — some devoted to the sex — some to horses — some to "*smiling*," and some to "the tiger." — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Aug. 23, 1858

**SMOOTH.** A meadow, or grass field.

Get some plantain and dandelion on the *smooth* for greens. — *Margaret*.

**TO SMOUCH.** To gouge; to take unfair advantage. Colloquial in New York.

**TO SMOUZE.** To demolish, as with a blow. Used in Ohio.

**SMUDGE.** A heap of damp combustibles placed on the windward side of the house and partially ignited, that the inky steam may smother or drive away mosquitoes. It is a North of England word.

We had taken about ten pounds of trout; and the first procedure, after reaching the camp, was to build a *smudge* or smoke-fire, to drive away these abominable gnats, who, fortunately, take flight with the first whiff of smoke. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

I have had a *smudge* made in a chafing-dish at my bedside, after a serious deliberation between choking and being devoured at small mouthfuls; and I conscientiously recommend choking. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

**SNAG.** A tree having its roots fastened in the bottom of a river; or a branch of a tree thus fastened. These are common in the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and frequently destroy steamboats which come in contact with them, by piercing their bows or sides. The word itself is not a new one, and is defined by Johnson as "a jag or sharp protuberance."

Thar war jest light enough as we floated down the Missouri to tell that *snags* war plenty, and jest enough corn-juice inside to make a fellar not care a cuss for them. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 278.

**TO SNAG.** To run against a snag or projecting branch of a sunken tree.

Drove a pretty fair business last year; only sunk one broad-horn, and that war *snagged* in the Mississippi. — *Ben. Wilson's Jug Race*.

**TO SNAKE.** 1. To crawl like a snake. A common expression at the West. The following illustration of the use of this term is from a Western newspaper:

In Iowa, as in other new countries, the duties of a judge often begin before a court-house or place of shelter has been provided. Not long since, Judge Williams was obliged to hold his first court beneath the shade of a large tree, where logs were rolled up for seats, a larger one being provided for the Judge. The clerk used a shingle on his knee for a desk; and the jury, after being charged by the judge, were sent in care of a sheriff to a hollow, or ravine, where they could sit in conclave beyond the view of the court or spectators.

The grass grew very tall in the neighborhood, and the jurymen lay down in a ring in the grass, where they could more perfectly exclude themselves from observation. The jury had not been long in their quarters, when a tall, raw-boned fellow rose up and addressed the Judge as follows:

"May it please your honor, I wish to speak to you." "Order, sir; what is it?" "Judge," continued he, with the utmost gravity, "is it right for fellows to *snake* in the grass?" "How? what is that, sir?" "Why, you see," said the Yankee, "there 's some fellows who 's ternal fraid the Grand Jury will find something agin 'em, which they deserve; and they are *snaking* up to the Grand Jury on their bellies in the grass, kind of trying to hear what the jury are talking about." "No," responded the judge, with as much gravity as he could command, "I do not allow of *snaking*. Here, Mr. Sheriff, go station a guard around each jury's hollow; and if a man is found '*snaking*,' have him brought before me, and I will cause him to be punished."

But while I drink'd the peaceful cup of a pure heart and mind  
(Mixed with some whiskey, now and then), Pomp he *snaked* up behind,  
And, creepin' gradually close to, as sly as any mink,  
Jest grabbed my leg, and then pulled foot quicker than you could wink.

*Buglow Papers.*

2. To beat; to thrash. Southern.

Any gal like me, what can take a bag of meal on her shoulder and tote it to mill, ought to be able to *snake* any man of her heft. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 120.

**TO SNAKE OUT.** To drag out; to haul out, as a snake from its hole. A farmer, in clearing land, attaches a chain to a stump or log, whereby to

draw it out; this he calls *snaking* it out. Maj. Downing says, in speaking of a person who fell into the river :

We *snaked* him out of that scrape as slick as a whistle. — *Letters*, p. 14.

I went down again and found the cow as dead as a heerrin'. We skinned her and *snaked* her out of the barn upon the snow. — *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March, 1848.

**SNAKE-HEAD.** An object of dread to travellers on the early railways. It consisted of the end of a flat iron rail, which was sometimes thrown up in front of the car wheels, and passed through the cars. Serious accidents have been caused by them. This species of rail, however, is no longer used, except for temporary purposes.

The road to Petersburg consists of an iron strap laid upon pine timber, and is beautifully diversified with that peculiar half horizontal, vibrating rail, known as "*snake's head*." Frequently, during our short ride, an iron *snake* would strike his heavy *head* against the iron fenders of our car; and then, as we rolled on unharmed, he would shake himself as if in wrath, awaiting another opportunity for vengeance. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**SNAKE-ROOT.** Many plants have obtained a reputation as cures for the poison of the rattlesnake; and while none of them have retained their character in this respect, the really active properties which brought them into notice have obtained for some of them a place in our *Materia Medica*. Among the best known and most important are Black *snake-root* (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), Virginia *snake-root* (*Aristolochia serpentaria*), and Seneca *snake-root* (*Polygala senega*). Other species of these genera are sometimes known as *snake-roots*.

**SNAP.** Applied to the weather; as, "a cold *snap*," i. e. a period of sudden cold weather. A common expression.

**SNAP-BEANS, or SNAPS.** See *Bush-Bean*.

**SNAPPED.** Drunk. Used at the South.

I like to forgot to tell you 'bout cousin Pete. He got *snapt* on egg-nog when he heard of my engagement. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 102.

**SNAPPING TURTLE.** (Genus, *Chelonura*.) A reptile common to all parts of the United States, so named from its propensity to snap at every thing within its reach.

**SNARL.** 1. A quarrel; an angry contest. Provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

This gallant officer and estimable man [Sir John Harvey] has been transferred from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland, where Lord Falkland had got into a *snarl*. — *Com. Adv.*, April 1, 1846.

The members of the House of Representatives got themselves into a most admirable *snarl* on Saturday afternoon, by their proceedings in reference to the recent case of resistance to the serving of a habeas corpus writ. — *Boston Traveller*, Feb. 12.

## 2. A brood; a tribe.

The Rev. Mr. Scrantum, having expressed a wish to withdraw from his parish in consequence of the insufficiency of his salary, which was four hundred dollars a year with a "donation party," one of his miserly parishioners said :

He hoped Mr. Scrantum's request would be granted ; that for his part he'd long been of opinion they'd ought to have a cheaper minister, and one that had n't such a *snarl* of young ones. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 270.

**SNEAKING NOTION.** To have a *sneaking notion* for a lady, is to have a timid or concealed affection for her.

Well, I always used to have a sort of a *sneakin' notion* for Mary Stallins. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 11.

I c'en a most made up my mind to break the ice to Hannah Downer, and tell her I shouldn't wonder if I had a *sneakin' notion* arter her — then I should ha' been reg'lar courtin' in less than a month. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II.

An army such as me would fight the devil —

What are ye giggling at ? Can't ye be civil ?

There — that's well done ; now I've a *sneaking notion* —

When I git hum — I'll git some grand promotion.

*D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*, p. 102.

**TO BE SNEEZED AT.** A thing that is *not to be sneezed at* is not to be despised.

My knowledge of horse-flesh *ain't to be sneezed at*. I buy a horse for fifty dollars, and sell him for two hundred ; that's skill — it ain't a cheat. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 173.

**SNEEZER.** A dashing, thorough-going fellow.

It's awful to hear a minister swear ; and the only match I know for it is to hear a regular *sneezzer* of a sinner quote Scripture. — *Sam Slick*.

**SNELL.** See *Leader*.

**SNIPPY.** Finical ; and substantively, a finical person. A woman's word. In the South they use the word *snipitious*.

**TO SNOOP.** (Dutch, *snoepen*.) To clandestinely eat dainties or other vic-tuals which have been put aside. A servant who goes slyly into a dairy-room and drinks milk from a pan, or a child who makes free with the preserves in the cupboard, is said to be *snooping*. The term is peculiar to New York.

**SNOOZER.** A thief who follows the business of robbing the boarders at hotels. He takes board and lodgings, and endeavors to share a room and become familiar with some country merchant ; after which, by various tricks, he succeeds in robbing him. The police reports of New York exhibit frequent cases of this system of depredation.

**SNORE.** (Dutch, *snoer*, a string.) A string with a button on one end to spin a top with. This term is retained by the boys of New York.

**To SNORE.** *I snore!* is one of the many euphemistic oaths used in New England.

I hain't lived in the woods to be skeered at owls, *I snore* — *Margaret*.

**To SNORT.** To laugh outright. — *Brockett's Glossary*. Used in low language in New England.

We all *snorted* and snickered. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 15.

**SNORTER.** 1. A dashing, riotous fellow. A vulgar Western term.

"I'm a roaring earthquake in a fight," sung out one of the half-horse, half-alligator sort of fellows, "a real *snorter* of the universe. I can stike as hard as fourth-proof lightning, and keep it up, rough and tumble, as long as a wild-cat." — *Thorp's Backwoods*, p. 183.

2. A gale of wind.

The skipper said, after we have had our grab we must make all snug, for we're going to have a *snorter*. — *The Cape Ann Fisherman*.

3. The edge pieces of tortoise-shell, called also toe-nails or nails.

**SNOWBALL.** A jeering appellation for a negro.

**SNUFF-DIPPER.** One who makes a practice of chewing snuff. See *To Dip Snuff*.

**SNUG.** A projection or shoulder against which a piece fits, in machinery.

**To SNUG.** To conceal from the owner, to purloin. English boys use the word *smug* in a similar sense.

I'd rather starve than make money in any low way. I'd stuff watches, drop pocket-books, or do any thing in the genteel way, but I'd never condescend to *snug* dogs. — *A Glance at New York*.

**I SNUM!** A New England euphemism for *I swear!*

The Yankee boy, with starting eyes,  
When first the elephant he espies,  
With wonder *snums*, and swons, and cries,

"By golly!" — *Home Journal*.

**So** is often used for *such*; an old form of speech which may now be considered antiquated.

Prof W——, who has acquired so high distinction in teaching the elements of music and singing. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To SOAK.** To bake thoroughly. It is particularly applied to bread which, to be good, must be macerated, as it were, in the caloric of the oven. If it be dough-baked, the complaint is, that it has not been sufficiently *soaked*. — *Holloway*. This word is used in the same sense in New England.

**SOAP-LOCK.** A lock of hair made to lie smooth by soaping it. Hence,

also, a name given to a low set of fellows who lounge about the markets, engine-houses, and wharves of New York, and are always ready to engage in midnight broils. It is, in fact, but another name for a Rowdy or Loafer. The name comes from their wearing long side-locks, which they are said to smear with soap, in order to give them a sleek appearance.

The way my last letter has cradled off the *soap-locks*, and imperials, and goat-knots, and musty shows, is truly alarming. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**SOAP-PLANT.** (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*). A plant common in California and New Mexico, where it is called *ammole*, and which, when pounded and broken, answers the purposes of soap. Besides its detergent quality, the leaves are used for making mats for saddle cloths. .

After leaving the creek we passed a barren rolling prairie with scanty herbage, and covered with the palmilla or *soap-plant* — *Ruxton's Adv. in Mexico*, p. 217.

**SOBBED.** Soaked; wet. Applied to lands. An English word, though little used.

The high lands are *sobbed* and boggy — *Letter from Charleston N. Y. Herald*.

**SOCDOLAGER.** This strange word is probably a perversion in spelling and pronunciation of *doxology*, a stanza sung at the close of religious services, and as a signal of dismissal. Hence a *socdolager* is a conclusive argument; the winding up of a debate; a settler; and figuratively, in a contest, a heavy blow, which shall bring it to a close. The term is also applied to a patent fish-hook, having two hooks which close upon each other by means of a spring as soon as the fish bites, thereby securing its victim.

In his remarks on an excellent move at a game of chess, the editor of the N. Y. Spirit of the Times observes :

"This is a *socdolager*; there is not even temporary relief to be obtained; the manner in which the game is now brought to a conclusion is certainly neat.

I gave the fellow a *socdolager* over his head with the barrel of my gun, when he sot off as if the devil had kick'd him on end. — *Crockett's Bear Hunt*.

Oh! I forgot to tell you, that in the fight, as I aimed a *socdolager* at the fellow, he ducked his head, and hitting him awkwardly, I sprained my wrist. — *Col. Jones's Fight. A Kentucky Story*.

**SOCIALISTIC.** Appertaining to the principles of socialism.

And now let us briefly assure the Courier that it is greatly, grievously wrong in supposing that we shrink, or fluter, or despond with regard to the future of France, in view of the prominence and imminence given to social theories and ideas by the new Revolution. On the contrary, our columns will bear witness that we have, from the hour that the fall of Louis Philippe was known here, to this moment, profoundly rejoiced in the Revolution itself, and more especially in its *socialistic* aspects and tendencies. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 25, 1848.

**SOCIETY.** In Connecticut, a number of families united and incorporated for the purpose of supporting public worship is called an *ecclesiastical so-*

*ciety*. This is a parish, except that it has not territorial limits. In Massachusetts such an incorporated society is usually called a "parish," though consisting of persons only, without regard to territory. — *Webster*.

TO SOCK. To press by a hard blow a man's hat over his head and face. Used in Rhode Island. I have never heard it elsewhere. The New York term is, *to crown*.

SODA-PRAIRIE. A plain covered with an efflorescence of soda, elsewhere called natron. These plains, of great extent, are found in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona.

SOFT CORN. Flattery. The more common terms are "soft sawder" and "soft soap," which see.

I allowed that the old man was pretty green, or he'd never swallowed all the *soft-corn* I fed him on. — *Maj. Bunkum. Spirit of the Times*.

SOFT SAWDER, i. e. *soft soldier*. Flattery; blarney.

Sam Slick said he trusted to *soft sawder* to get his wooden clocks into a house, and to human nature that they should never come out again. — *Nature and Human Nature*, p. 311.

TO SOFT SAWDER. To flatter; to blarney.

I don't like to be left alone with a gall; it's plaguy apt to set me a *soft sawderin'* and a courtin'. — *Sam Slick in England*, p. 19.

SOFT-SHELL CRAB, or SOFT-CRAB. See *Shedder Crab*.

SOFT-SHELL DEMOCRATS, SOFT-SHELLS, or SOFTS. The less conservative division of the New York Democrats. See *Hard-shell Democrats*.

At a Democratic meeting in the county of Orleans, N. Y., in September, 1858, it was:

*Resolved*, — That the terms Hunker, Barnburner, *Soft-shell*, and Hardshell, have become obsolete, and hereafter we will be known only by the term Democrat; and that we will regard all as such who are sound upon national politics, and adhere to the usages of the party.

SOFT SOAP. Flattery; blarney. A vulgar phrase, though much used. See *Soft sawder*.

TO SOFT SOAP. To flatter; to blarney.

I am tired of this system of placemen *soft soaping* the people, — telling them just before an election what fine, honest, noble, generous fellows they are, and then, just after election, turning their backs on them. — *Mike Walsh. Speech*, Sept. 1843.

My popularity with the ladies was amazin'. Te see them flattering and *soft soaping* me all at once, you would have sworn I had nothing to do but pick and choose. — *McClintock's Tales*.



You don't catch me a slanderin' folks behind their backs, and then *soft soapin'* them to their faces. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 308.

**SOFT WOODLANDS.** A term applied, in the British Provinces, to the districts or intervals covered with various species of pine trees.

**SOME.** 1. Somewhat; something. Ex. "He is *some* better than he was;" "it rains *some*," etc. Used chiefly by the illiterate. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

2. Of some account; considerable; notable; famous. A modern slang use of the word.

A mere glance would tell the gazer that this gentleman was no ordinary man, either in a physical or mental point of view; as an ancient Roman poet used elegantly to express it, it at once became evident that he was "*some*." — *N. Orleans Delta*.

I do not know whether you have any canebrakes at the North; but our Georgia canebrakes are *some*, I can tell you. — *Lett. from Georgia, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

When a boy, our trapper was "*some*," he said, with the rifle, and always had a hankering for the West. — *Ruxton. Far West*, p. 54.

We don't remember a closer or severer winter since that in which the old Tribune office burnt down, which was admitted by the oldest inhabitant to be "*some*" in the way of cold winters. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 15, 1849.

Hiram Twine was a good specimen of a go-ahead Yankee. He was *some* on horses, numerous at billiards, immense at ten pins, and upwards of considerable among the politicians. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**SOME PUMPKINS.** A term in use, at the South and West, in opposition to the equally elegant phrase "small potatoes." The former is applied to any thing large or noble; the latter to any thing small or mean.

A writer in the "Pennsylvanian," under date of Nov. 15, 1849, thus explains its origin:

"I am not aware of the saying being incorporated into any play extant, although it can claim an existence of nearly sixty years. It originated with James Fennell, the celebrated tragedian, who came to this country in the year '92. As the circumstance which gave rise to it is somewhat singular, I take the extract from his life, published in the year 1814, which gave birth to an expression that has now become a part and portion of our *polite*, and I may say *new*, style of conversation. When quite a lad, Fennell, in company with Dr. Mosely, and the celebrated philosopher Mr. Walker, and son, made the tour of France. Speaking of this portion of the journey, the author says:

'I recollect nothing of consequence that took place, till we arrived at the celebrated city of Rouen. Physic and philosophy had, from their situation in front, a wide share of vision; but young Walker and myself could only look down. Wishing, however, to see all we could, we kept peeping through our little windows. As we

were passing, without our [the young ones] knowing it, the famous Cathedral of Rouen, young Walker, peeping through his little square, exclaimed, "Look, Fennell, what *immense pumpkins*." His father, who had been attentively gazing at the building, turned round, exclaiming, "God! can you be looking at pumpkins, while you are passing such a cathedral as this?" Young Walker observed that he did not know what he was passing, for he could see nothing above the ground.'

"Young Fennell could not resist the temptation of plaguing Walker about the pumpkins; so, whenever they approached a stately building or towering spire, he would invariably exclaim, 'Look, Walker, there are *some pumpkins*!'" It is almost needless to say it became a favorite, if not a common saying, as it is to this day."

This story is sufficiently circumstantial, and the origin it assigns may be the true one; yet the stress which is always laid on the "*some*" in this phrase shows that it has the purely adjectival sense which we have ascribed to the word under number two, whereas the anecdote gives it its usual pronominal meaning.

Although the Mexican women are not distinguished for beauty, I never remember once to have seen an ugly woman. Their brilliant eyes make up for any deficiency of feature, and their figures are full and voluptuous. Now and then, moreover, one does meet with a perfectly beautiful creature; and when a Mexican woman does combine such perfection, she is "*some pumpkins*," as the Missourians say when they wish to express something superlative in the female line. — *Ruxton's Adventures in Mexico*, p. 57.

Cass is *some pumpkins*, and will do the needful in the office line if he is elected, which I hope and trust will be his fate. I am no Democrat, as embraced on their whole platform; but I am, what I conceive to be, a "least evil" man. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 21, 1848.

Franklin was a poor printer boy, and Washington only a land surveyor; yet they grewed to be *some pumpkins*. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*.

I'm out of my cradle, I'm safe through my teens,  
I guess I'm "*some pumpkins*," and think I know beans;  
Henceforth I'm to battle, with banner unfurled,  
And carve my way through a thundering rough world. — *Doesticks*.

SOMEWHERE, like *anywhere* and *nowhere*, is a common vulgarism; as, "A hundred dollars, or *somewheres* there along," i. e. thereabouts.

SOON. At the South this word is frequently used by all classes as a substitute for *early*. Thus one says, if about to depart on a journey, "I shall put out (i. e. start) *soon* in the morning." "I shall be there *soon* in the evening."

SOPH. In the American colleges an abbreviation of Sophomore. — *Hall's College Words*.

*Sophs* wha ha' in commons fed!  
*Sophs* wha ha' in commons bled!  
*Sophs* wha ne'er from commons fled!

Puddings, steaks, or wines! — *Rebelliad*, p. 52.

**SOPHOMORE.** This word has generally been considered an American barbarism, but was probably introduced into our country at a very early period from the University of Cambridge, England. Among the cant terms at that University, as given in the "Gradus ad Cantabrigiam," we find Soph-Mor as the next distinctive appellation to Freshman. It is added, that a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine thinks Mor an abbreviation of the Greek *μαρία*, introduced at a time when the Encomium Moriae, the Praise of Folly, by Erasmus, was so generally used. The ordinary derivation of the word, from *σοφός* and *μωρός*, would seem, therefore, to be incorrect. The young Sophs at Cambridge appear formerly to have received the adjunct mor, *μωρός*, to their names, either as one they courted for the reason mentioned above, or as one given them in sport for the supposed exhibition of inflated feeling in entering upon their new honors. The term thus applied seems to have passed at a very early period from Cambridge in England to Cambridge in America, as the next distinctive appellation to Freshmen, and thus to have been attached to the second of the four classes in our American colleges, while it has now almost ceased to be known, even as a cant word, at the parent institution in England from whence it came. — *Prof. Goodrich, in Webster's Dictionary.*

**SOPHOMORICAL.** A term applied to speeches and writings containing high-sounding words and but little sense.

**SORA, or SOREE.** (*Rallus carolinus*.) The Carolina rail, a bird which assembles in large numbers on the reedy shores of the larger rivers in the middle and adjoining warmer States, at the approach of autumn, and affords abundant employment to the sportsman at that season. — *Nuttall.*

**SORREL-TREE.** See *Sour Wood*.

**Sorter, for sort o'.** Sort of, kind of.

They had with them a long-legged chap, a *sorter* lawyer; and he advised them to try and get the time of punishment put off, and that would give 'em a chance to run them off. — *Spirit of the Times.*

**SOSSLE, or SOZZLE.** A lazy or sluttish woman. Connecticut. In the South of England *sozz-brangle* is used in the same sense.

**To SOSSLE, or SOZZLE.** To splash. Connecticut. In Sussex, England, it means to make a slop.

A sandpiper glided along the shore; she ran after it, but could not catch it; she sat down and *sozzled* her feet in the foam. — *Margaret*, p. 8.

**SOT.** 1. A corrupt pronunciation of the past tense or past participle of *to set*.

I wish Seth would talk with you sometime, Doctor    Along in the spring he was down helpin' me to lay stone fence,—it was when we was fencin' off the south pastur' lot,—and we talked pretty nigh all day; and it re'lly did seem to me that the longer we talked, the *sotter* Seth grew — *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan., 1859.

## 2. A vulgar pronunciation for *sat*.

A story is told of a Bostonian's first appearance in polite society in Arkansas. The company were engaged in dancing, but the loveliest female present occupied a chair at the window without a partner. Stepping up to the lady with a palpitating heart, his mind greatly excited for fear of a refusal, he exclaimed :

"Will you do me the honor to grace me with your company for the next set?"

Her lustrous eyes shone with unwonted brilliancy, her white pearly teeth fairly glistened in the flickering candle light, her heaving snowy bosom rose and fell with joyful rapture, as she replied :

"Yes, sir-ee! for I have *sot*, and *sot*, and *sot*, till I have about tuk root!" — *Eve*. (*Wash.*) *Star*, Sept. 2, 1858.

**SOUND ON THE GOOSE.** A phrase originating in the Kansas troubles, and signifying true to the cause of slavery.

**SOUR GUM.** A species of *Nyssa*. See *Gum*.

**SOUR KROUT.** (Germ. *sauer Kraut*.) Sour cabbage, that is, cabbage cut fine, pressed into a cask, and suffered to ferment until it becomes sour.

The Dutch burghers were ordered not to buy [of the Yankees] any of their Weathersfield onions, wooden bowls, etc., and to furnish them with no supplies of gin, gingerbread, or *sour kroust* — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

**SOUR WOOD.** (*Andromeda arborea*.) A beautiful tree, which, from the large quantity of acid present in all parts of it, is sometimes called Sorrel tree.

**SOUTH.** The term *Southern States*, or the *South*, is very commonly used to denote all the States south of Mason and Dixon's line, in which slavery exists. See *North*.

**SOUTH AMERICANS.** That branch of the American or Know-Nothing party which belongs to the South and favors slavery.

**SOUTHERNER, or SOUTHRON.** A native of the Southern States.

**SPAKE.** The preterite of *speak*. This antiquated word is still heard occasionally from the pulpit, as well as in conversation. — *Pickering*.

**SPAN.** A *span* of horses consists of two of nearly the same color, and otherwise nearly alike, which are usually harnessed side by side. The word signifies properly the same as "yoke," when applied to horned-cattle, from buckling or fastening together. But in America, *span* always implies resemblance in color at least; it being an object of ambition with gentle-

men and with teamsters to unite two horses abreast that are alike.—*Webster*. This use of the word is not mentioned in any of the English dictionaries or glossaries.

TO SPAN. To agree in color, or in color and size; as, "The horses *span* well." New England.—*Webster*.

SPAN CLEAN, or SPANDY CLEAN. Very clean, perfectly clean.

TO SPANCEL. 1. To tie the hind legs of an animal, particularly a cow when milking. Provincial in England.

2. To prevent a crab from biting, by sticking the point of a leg into the base of each movable claw.

SPANISH BAYONET. A name commonly given to the very sharp-pointed, rigid leaves of a species of *Yucca* growing in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.

The cactus growing rank, tortuous, and grotesquely, and the yucca, or *Spanish bayonet*, here a low clump of sharp-pointed, stiff, tusk-like leaves, indicated our approach to Mexico.—*Olmsted's Texas*, p. 138.

TO SPARK IT. To court. Used chiefly in New England.

You were a nation sight wiser than brother Jonathan, sister Keziah, poor little Aminadab, and all the rest; and above all, my own towny Lydia, the Deacon's darlin darter; with whom I've *sparkled it*, pretty oftentimes, so late —*D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

Miss Sal, I's going to say, as how,

We'll *spark* it here to night;

I kind of love you Sal, I vow,

And mother said I might.

*J. G. Fessenden. Song, Yankee Doodle.*

Some think I ought to get married, and two or three have tried to *spark* it with me; but I never listen to none of their flattery.—*Southern Sketches*, p. 120.

SPARKING. "To go a *sparkling*," is to go a courting; a common expression in the Northern States.

Mr. Justice Crow was soon overtaken; Lieut Col. Simcoe accosted him roughly, called him "Tory," nor seemed to believe his excuses, when, in the American idiom for courtship, he said, "he had only been *sparkling*." — *Simcoe, Military Journal*, p. 73.

He rolled his eyes horribly, and said that that was the way the young men cast sheep's eyes when they went a *sparkling*. — *Mrs. Clavens's Western Clearings*, p. 16.

She's courted been, by many a lad,

And knows how *sparkung*'s done, sir,

With Jonathan she was right glad,

To have a little fun, sir.—*Song. Yankee Doodle.*

Finally I swore that if I ever meddled, or had any dealings with the feminine gender again, in the *sparkling* line, I wish I might be hanged.—*McClintock. Beadle's Courtship*.

**SPARSE.** (Lat. *sparsus*). Scattered; thinly spread; not dense. — (*P. Mag.*)

This word has been regarded as of American origin; but it is found in Jamieson's Dictionary of the Scottish Language. It is in common use in America, though little used in England. — *Worcester*.

**SPARSELY.** In a scattered, or sparse manner; thinly. — *Worcester*.

The country between Trinity river and the Mississippi is *sparsely* settled, containing less than one inhabitant to the square mile, one in four being a slave. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 365.

**SPARROW GRASS.** A vulgar pronunciation of *asparagus* both in England and America, sometimes in the New York market contracted to "*grass*." Hence the celebrated charade by a certain alderman:

My first is a little thing not hops — (*sparrow*);

My second brings us good hay crops — (*grass*);

My whole I eat with mutton chops — (*sparrow grass*).

*Pegge, Anecdotes of the Eng. Lang.*, p. 54.

**SPAT.** 1. A slap. "He gave me a *spat* on the side of the head."

2. A petty combat; a little quarrel or dissension. A vulgar use of the word in New England. — *Webster*.

The National Bank and the Mechanic's Banking Association have had a standing *spat* for some time. — *N. Y. Com Adv.*

We do not believe that Messrs B—— and W—— have resigned their seats in the cabinet. There has been a *spat* of course; but there may be many more before either of the Secretaries will resign \$6,000 a year. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**TO SPAT.** 1. To slap.

The little Isabel leaped up and down, *spatting* her hands. — *Margaret*.

2. To dispute; to quarrel. A low word. New England.

**SPEC.** A contraction of *speculation*; as, "He made a good *spec* in flour."

**SPECIAL DEPOSIT.** A deposit made in a bank subject to the control of the depositor, and which is not made a part of the funds of the bank to be used by it in its business.

**SPECIAL PARTNER.** A member of a limited partnership, who furnishes certain funds to the common stock, and whose liability extends no further than the funds furnished. — *Kent's Commentaries*, Vol. III. p. 35.

**SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP.** A partnership limited to a particular branch of business, or to one particular subject. — *Judge Story*.

**SPECIE**, for a *species*. A grammatical blunder occasionally heard in speaking, but not often met with in writing. The New York Tribune, however, of May 19, 1858, in describing a new game-trap, says:

The size of the trap, the height at which it ought to be suspended, and the nature of the bait, depends upon the *specie* of the animal hunted for.

**SPECK, or SPEC.** A bit; in the least.

I doubled up my fist, for I did not like the treatment a *spec*. — *S. Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**SPECK AND APPLEJEES.** (Dutch, *spek en appeltjes*.) Pork fat and apples cut up and cooked together. An old-fashioned Dutch dish still made in New York.

**SPECS, for spectacles.**

My ma' was used to put on her *specs* and say, —. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

**SPELL.** A turn of work; a vicissitude of labor. — *Todd's Johnson*. It is often used in a secondary sense, to denote a short turn; a little time; a bout; a fit; and is applied particularly to work, to sickness, or to the weather. Provincial in England and colloquial in the United States.

Their toil is so extreme as they cannot endure it above four hours in a day, but are succeeded by *spells*; the residue of their time they wear out at coytes and kayles. — *Carew*

Come, thou's had thy *spell*, it's now my time to put in a word. — *Carr's Craven Glossary*.

This *spell* of bad weather, though in summer, wellnigh outlasted their provisions; and when at length they were able to make the signal that a landing would be practicable, scarcely a twenty-four hours' stock remained on the rock. — *Lond. Quarterly Rev.*, No. 168, p. 379.

Nothing new has happened in this quarter since my last, except the setting in of a severe *spell* of cold weather and a considerable fall of snow. — *Letter of G. Washington*, Dec. 25, 1775.

A gentle, misty air from the S. E. makes me hope that we are going to have a warm *spell*. — *Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. I. p. 182.

Josiah Norton said he had come home from the South, where he had been peddling a *spell*. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 90.

Spain has obtained a breathing *spell* of some duration from the internal convulsions which have, through so many years, marred her prosperity. — *President Tyler's Message to Congress*, 1844.

I and the General have got things now pretty considerable snug; public affairs go on easier than they did a *spell* ago, when Mr. Adams was President. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 35.

The Havana "Prensa" notices a remarkable incident as one of the results of the shock from the recent terrible explosion. No less than the restoration to reason of a lady of that city, who had entirely lost her mind some six months ago, from a severe and protracted *spell* of sickness. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1858.

**TO SPELL.** To relieve by taking a turn at a piece of work. — *Worcester*.

I was sometimes permitted, as an indulgence, to *spell* my father in the favorite employment of shelling corn. — *Goodrich's Recollections*, Vol. I. p. 62.

**SPICE-BUSH.** (*Benzoin odoriferum*). A plant, called also Wild Allspice and Fever-bush, formerly used as a substitute for allspice, and also valued for its medicinal properties.

This tangled thicket on the bank above  
Thy basin, how thy waters keep it green!  
. . . . . there the *spice-bush* lifts  
Her leafy lances. — *Bryant, The Fountain.*

**SPIDER.** A cast-iron frying-pan with three legs.

**SPIKE-TEAM.** A wagon drawn by three horses, or by two oxen and a horse, the latter leading the oxen or span of horses.

**SPILL.** A strip of paper rolled up to light a lamp or a cigar. Provincial in England.

**SPINDLE CITY.** Lowell, Massachusetts; so called from its many cotton factories.

A letter from Lowell says the "*spindle city*" is gradually resuming its steady hum of industry and wonted business-like appearance. — *Scientific American*, Jan. 23, 1858.

**TO SPIN STREET-YARN.** To go gadding about the streets.

They say when Sally Hagle aint a *spinnin' street-yarn*, she don't do nothin' but write poetry, and the whole heft o' the house-keepin' is on her mother's shoulders. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 149.

**SPIRIT-LAND.** An expression which, in the cant of the rappers, means the abode of departed spirits, the other world.

**SPIRIT-RAPPER.** A person, who, professing to act as a "medium," between embodied and disembodied spirits, interprets raps produced by an unseen agency on tables, floors, &c., as messages from the other world.

**SPIRIT-RAPPINGS.** Rappings suppose to be produced by disembodied spirits.

**SPIRITUAL.** A Mormon concubine. See *Spiritual Wife*.

**SPIRITUAL FUNERAL.** A funeral conducted after the fashion of the believers in spiritualism.

A *spiritual funeral* was held at Lowell lately, over the remains of J. B. Smith. Miss Emma Houston prayed, and the dead Smith spoke through her. The wife and family of the deceased, instead of putting on black, dressed in white, with white shawls, and bonnets trimmed with white. — (*Balt.*) *Sun.*, July 12, 1858.

**SPIRITUAL MEDIUM.** See *Medium*.

**SPIRITUAL WIFE**, or simply **SPIRITUAL.** A Mormon extra wife or concubine.



These extra wives are known by sundry designations; some call them "*spirit-uals*," others "sealed ones;" our landlady is fond of calling them "fixins," and the tone in which she brings it out is in the last degree contemptuous. — *Life among the Mormons*, Putnam's Mag., Vol. VI. p. 147.

**SPIRITUALISM.** The old doctrine, revived of late years in this country, and which has gained numerous converts, that the spirits of the departed can and do communicate with the living through the so called "spiritual mediums."

**SPIRITUALIST.** A believer in the doctrine of spiritualism.

**SPIT-CURL.** A detached lock of hair curled upon the temple; probably from having been at first plastered into shape by the saliva. It is now understood that the mucilage of quince-seed is used by the ladies for this purpose.

You may prate of your lips, and your teeth of pearl,  
And your eyes so brightly flashing;  
My song shall be of that *saliva curl*  
Which threatens my heart to smash in.

*Boston Transcript*, Oct. 30, 1858.

**SPLENDIFEROUS.** Splendid; fine. A factitious word used only in jest.

To my mind, a *splendiferous* woman and a first chop horse are the noblest works of creation. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 280.

There's something so fascinating in the first blush of evening, that it's enough to make a man strip off his jacket of mortality, and swim the gulf of death, for the sake of reaching the *splendiferous* splendors that decorate the opposite shore. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 69.

An itinerant gosseller was holding forth to a Kentuckian audience, on the kingdom of heaven:

"Heaven, my beloved hearers," said he, "is a glorious, a beautiful, a *splendiferous*, an angeliferous place. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, it has not entered into the imagination of any Cracker in these here diggings what carryings on the just made perfect have up thar."

**SPLIT.** 1. A division; dissension. A word in current use, both in England and in this country, although not yet in the dictionaries.

The fiery spirit which has occasioned a *split* among the British Archæologists, would appear not yet to have burnt itself out, etc. — *London Athenæum*, p. 850.

The *split* in the Whig organization, if it come to any thing serious, will extend beyond the Presidential election. — *Letter from Boston, New York Herald*, June 21, 1848.

2. A rapid pace or rate of going. "He went full *split*," i. e. as hard as he could drive. "To go like *split*," is a common expression in New England.

There was no ox-teams [in New York] such as we have in Downingville; but there was no end to the one-hoss teams, goin' like *split* all over the city. — *Maj. Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 64.

**TO SPLIT.** To go at a rapid pace; to drive, or dash along.

The thing tuk first rate, and I set the niggers a drummin' and fifin' as hard as they could *split* right afore the cabin door. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**SPLIT-TICKET.** When two or more important offices are to be filled at the same time, the wire-pullers of each party select the men they wish their party to support, and print their names on a ticket to be deposited in the ballot-box. It sometimes happens, however, that individuals choose to think for themselves, and consequently erase one or more of the names and substitute others more to their liking. This is called a *split ticket*, also a *scratch ticket*.

**SPLURGE.** A blustering demonstration; a swagger, dash.

Members of Congress should not forget when senator Benton was shinning around, making what they call in Missouri a great *splurge*, to get gold. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec. 13, 1845.

President Polk and the Loco-Foco party have been for some time past arduously engaged upon a work known as "Mexico in Slices." The first slice, "Texas," caused quite a sensation; the second, California and New Mexico, is now making a *splurge*; and the third, "The Sierra Madre," is under way. — *Philadelphia North American*.

Did you see Major Coon's wife when she came in? Did n't she cut a *splurge*? I never did see such an affected critter as she in all my born days. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 67.

**TO SPLURGE.** To make a blustering demonstration in order to produce an effect; to swagger, cut a dash. A term in common use at the South and West.

Cousin Pete was thar *splurgin* about in the biggest, with his dandy-cut trowsers and big whiskers. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 101.

Well, them was great times, but now the settlements is got too thick for them to *splurge*. — *Porter's Tales of the South-West*, p. 54.

**SPOILS, i. e. the spoils of office.** The pay and emoluments of official station, specifically referred to as the leading inducements to partisan activity, and as distinct from political zeal generally.

It has been asserted that to the victors belong the *spoils*. Let us determine that we will be the victors, and that if we must have the *spoils* they shall be appropriated to the good of the country. — *Speech of Hon. Mr. Morehead*, June, 1848.

Men looking to the *spoils* care not for principles, whether they be of the North or of the South. — *Washington Cor. of N. Y. Com. Adv.*

It is estimated that there are at least sixty thousand office-holders under the general administration, and that the amount of plunder annually distributed by government is equal to forty millions of dollars, which is expended in a thousand and one ways. The party which has the command of these office-holders, and the scattering of this vast amount of *spoils*, is possessed of a potent weapon. — *N. Y. Herald*, June, 1848.

Politics is nothing more nor less than a race for a purse, a game for the stakes, a battle for the *spoils*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 216.

**SPOOK.** (Dutch). A ghost; hobgoblin. A term much used in New York. This word has been adopted by the English at the Cape of Good Hope.

At one time I met the *spook* in the form of a very tall black man, accompanied by a large dog. — *Anderssen's South Africa*.

**SPOON.** "To do business with a big *spoon*," is the same as to cut a big swathe.

**SPOOPSIE.** A silly fellow; a noodle. New England.

**SPORTSMAN.** A term often applied to a gambler.

**SPOSEN.** A corrupt pronunciation of *supposing*.

**SPOSH.** A mixture of mud and water. See *Slush*. The New York Tribune, in speaking of the falling of rain and snow at the same time, adds:

The morning was blue and streaked, and the streets were one shining level of black *sposh*. — Nov. 25, 1845.

**SPOT.** A boatman on the Mississippi, being asked how he managed to secure sleeping time, answered, "I sleep in *spots*;" that is, at intervals, by snatches.

**TO SPOT.** 1. To mark a tree by cutting a chip from its side. Maine. See *Blaze*.

2. A term used by policemen for marking or identifying a thief or other suspected person. It is of recent origin, and is also used in England.

It is the business of all policemen, but more especially of detectives, to "*spot*" burglars, thieves, gamblers, and all violators of the law. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The five pickpockets whose names are given were detained in the cells all night, and were yesterday taken to the Deputy's office, where they were "shown up," so that they might be again "*spotted*." They were then told to go, and they went in a great state of indignation. — *New York Times*.

**SPOUTY.** Wet clay land is called in the West "*spouty* land," possibly because, when trodden upon, the water *spouts* up through any holes or depressions in the surface.

**SPREAD.** A bed-spread; a sort of day covering over the quilt. New England.

**TO SPREAD ONESELF.** To exert oneself.

We despatched Cullen to prepare a dinner. He had promised, to use his own expression, to *spread himself* in the preparation of this meal. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 266.

Hoss Allen [the judge] mounted the balcony of the hotel, and, rolling up his sleeves, *spread himself* for an unusually brilliant effort. — *Southern Sketches*.

**SPREAD EAGLE.** This term is frequently used among stock speculators. A broker, satisfied with small profits, and not disposed to involve himself in large transactions, sells, say one hundred shares Erie Railroad stock at fifty-eight, buyer sixty days, and at the same time buys the same quantity at fifty-seven, seller sixty days. The difference in this case in the price is one per cent., which would be so much profit, without any outlay of capital, provided both contracts run their full time. Having sold buyer's option sixty days, and bought seller's option sixty days, the time is equal; but it will be seen that he does not control the option in either case. The buyer can call when he pleases, which will compel the "*spread eagle*" operator to deliver; and the seller may deliver any time, which would compel the broker to receive. If he has capital to carry, the result would not differ from that anticipated; but if not, he may be caught in a tight place, and suffer serious losses. It is, on the whole, rather dangerous business, but not to the same extent as buying or selling on time for a rise or fall in market value. — *Hunt's Merchants' Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII.

**SPREAD-EAGLE STYLE.** A compound of exaggeration, effrontery, bombast, and extravagance, mixed metaphors, platitudes, defiant threats thrown at the world, and irreverent appeals flung at the Supreme Being. — *North American Review*, October, 1858.

**TO SPREE IT.** To get intoxicated.

If a young man creates his own ruination by going it loose and *spreeing it* tight, it is surely a disgrace. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**SPRING FEVER.** The listless feeling caused by the first sudden increase of temperature in spring. It is often said of a lazy fellow, "He has got the *spring fever*."

**SPRING-KEEPER.** A salamander, or small lizard-shaped animal, found in springs and fresh water rivulets, whence the name. See *Water-dogs*.

**SPROUTS.** A bunch of twigs. Hence, "*to put one through a course of sprouts*," is to give him a good drubbing.

Shepard, Morrissey's trainer, has taken up his quarters at the house of his very particular old friend, Australian Kelly, where he will doubtless be happy to see any gentlemen who want to be *put through* the necessary *course of* preliminary *sprouts* before they can win the laurels of the P. R. [prize ring]. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1858.

**SPRUNG.** Tipsy, intoxicated.

He reckoned they were a little bit *sprung*. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 87.

**SPRY.** Lively ; active ; nimble ; quick in action. — *Worcester.*

This word is much used in familiar language in New England. It is not in the English dictionaries, but Jennings notices it among the provincialisms of Somersetshire.

She is as *spry* as a cricket. — *Margaret*, p. 58.

"How are you, Jeremiah?" "Why, I'm kinder sorter middlin', Mr. Slick, what you call considerable numble and *spry*." — *Sam Slick.*

Know ye the land where the sinking sun  
Sees the last of earth when the day is done ;  
Where yellow Asia, withered and dry,  
Hears Young America, sharp and *spry*,  
With thumb in his vest, and a quizzical leer,  
Sing out, "Old Fogie, come over here!"

*Cozzens, Californian Ballad.*

**SPUNK.** Mettle ; spirit ; vivacity. — *Brockett's Glossary.* A colloquial word, considered in England extremely vulgar. See *Punk*.

I admire your independent spirit, Doolittle I like to have people think well of themselves. You have convinced me of your *spunk*. I am your friend. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England.*

**SPUNKY.** Mettlesome ; spirited ; vivacious. A colloquial word, which Forby mentions as provincial in Norfolk, England.

**SQUADDY.** Short and fat. A vulgar word formed from *squat* ; or perhaps a corruption of *squabby*.

I had hardly got seated, when in came a great stout, fat, *squaddy* woman. — *Muj. Downing, May Day*

**TO SQUALE.** To throw a stick or other thing with violence, and in such a manner that it skims along near the ground. New England. — *Pickering's Vocabulary.*

According to Grose, it is provincial in the West of England, and means, "to throw a stick, as at a cock."

**SQUANTUM.** The name of a species of fun known to the Nantucket folks, which is thus described by the New York Mirror: A party of ladies and gentlemen go to one of the famous watering-places of resort, where they fish, dig clams, talk, laugh, sing, dance, play, bathe, sail, eat, and have a general "good time." The food generally consists of chowder, baked clams, and fun. No one is admitted to the sacred circle who will take offence at a joke, and every one is expected to do his and her part towards creating a general laugh. Any man who speaks of business affairs (excepting matrimony) is immediately reprov'd, and on a second offence publicly chastised. Care is thrown to the wind, politics discarded, war ignored, pride humbled, stations levelled, wealth scorned, virtue exalted, and — this is "*squantum*."

I wish to all-fired smash I was to home, doin' chores about house, or hazin' round with Charity Baker and the rest of the gals at a *squantum*. — *Wise, Tales for the Marines*.

**SQUARE.** In the city of New York this term is applied to the open spaces caused by the junction of several streets. "Chatham square" and "Franklin square" are triangles!

**SQUASH.** A culinary vegetable. (Genus, *Cucurbita*.) It is not necessary to resort to the Greek *κυρνος* for the etymology of this word; it is Algonkin, and is often mentioned by the early writers.

In summer, when their [the Indians'] corn is spent, *squonter squashes* is their best bread, a fruit like a young pumpkin. — *Wood's New England*, 1634, p. 37.

*Aslutasquash*, the vine apple [of the Indians], which the English from them call *squashes*, about the bignesse of apples, of severall colours, sweete, light, wholesome, and refreshing. — *Roger Williams, Key to the Ind. Lang.*, 1643.

When the summer of your lives, my female friends, is drawing to a close — when your rosy charms begin to fade like the sprigs upon your calicos — and when, like vineless *squashes*, you have grown withered and yellow, Cupid will disdain to frequent your autumnal bowers. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 127.

**SQUASH-BUG.** (*Coreus tristis*.) A small yellow bug, injurious to the vines of squashes, melons, and cucumbers.

**TO SQUAT.** 1. To squeeze; to press. Ex. "The boy has *squat* his finger." Used by the vulgar in New England. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*. Mr. Todd has this word in his dictionary from Barret (1580): "To bruise or make flat by letting fall." Provincial in the South of England.

2. In the United States, to settle on another's lands, or on public lands, without having a title. — *Worcester*.

On either side of the bank the colonists had been allowed to *squat* on allotted portions, until the survey of the town should be completed. — *Wakefield's Adventures in New Zealand in 1844*.

The Yankees of Connecticut, those swapping, bargaining, *squatting* enemies of the Manhattos, made a daring inroad into their neighborhood, and founded a colony called Westchester. — *Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 13.

**SQUATTER.** In the United States, one that settles on new land without a title. — *Webster*.

When I was at Prairie du Chien, there were several of the officers who had been cited to appear in court for having, pursuant to order, removed *squatters* from the Indian lands on the Mississippi. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, Let. 29.

The Western *squatter* is a free and jovial character, inclined to mirth rather than evil; and when he encounters his fellow man at a barbecue, election, log-rolling, or frolic, he is more disposed to join in a feeling of hilarity than to participate in wrong or outrage. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

The London Spectator has the following remarks on this word, occasioned by the removal of a number of the occupants of Glenculvie, in

Scotland, who had *squatted* there as under-tenants: The term "*squatter*" is very ambiguous. In America it denotes a ragged rascal without a cent in his pockets, and with a rifle or woodman's axe in his hand. In Australia it designates a young Oxonian or retired officer of the army or navy, possessed of stock to the value of some thousands. In Scotland it seems to designate a person very differently circumstanced from either of the preceding. . . . The Scotchmen who "squat under tenants," are men who have followed their fathers and grandfathers for unknown generations in the occupancy of their huts and kail-yards. Their families are of older standing in the district than those of the tacksmen or the lairds. The Scotch *squatter* is no clandestine intruder upon the soil; he stands in the place of his forefathers, and the act which ejects him is a violent innovation on the customs of the country—a forcible change in a mode of tenancy sanctioned by the "use and wont" of all ages.—June 7, 1845.

**SQUATTER SOVEREIGNTY.** The right of the squatters or actual residents in a Territory of the United States to make their own laws and shape their own institutions.

One of the great merits of the Dred Scott decision is the total extinguishment it gives to the dogma of *squatter sovereignty* in the Territories. It utterly negatives the idea that there is any original jurisdiction or legislative authority in the Territory, and asserts that all authority therein is derivative, coming from without, and not inherent in its inhabitants or tribunals.—*The (Wash.) Union*, Nov. 8, 1858.

**SQUAW.** (Abenaki Ind.) An Indian woman. Mr. Duponceau, after giving a list of the languages and forms in which this word occurs, observes: "On voit que la famille de ce mot s'étend depuis les Knisténiaux en Canada, et les Skoffies et Montagnards d'Acadie, jusqu'aux Nanticokes sur les confins de la Virginie."—*Mém. sur les Langues d'Amérique du Nord*, p. 333.

**SQUAW-ROOT.** (*Conopholis americana*.) A medicinal plant put up by the Shakers, also called Cancer-Root. It is recommended for correcting the secretions, and possesses narcotic properties.

**SQUAW-WEED.** (*Senecio aureus*.) A medicinal plant used for diseases of the skin.

**TO SQUAWK.** To squeak, but with a deeper note. This word is colloquial in various parts of England and in New England.

"Good gracious!" said Mrs. Bedott, "if you'd a heard Miss C—— sing, you'd a gin up. The way she *squawked* it out was a caution to old gates on a windy day!"—*Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 208.

**SQUETEAGUE, or SQUETEE.** (*Labrus squeteague*.) A very common fish

in the waters of Long Island Sound and adjacent bays. It never visits rivers, and is similar in habits to the Tautog. In New York it is called Weak-fish, owing to the feeble resistance it makes when caught with a hook. The name is Narraganset Indian.

**TO SQUIB.** To throw squibs; to utter sarcastic or severe reflections; to contend in petty dispute; as, "two members of a society *squib* a little in debate." Colloquial. — *Webster*. This word is not in the English dictionaries.

**TO SQUID.** To fish by trolling with a squid, either natural or artificial.

The bluefish is taken by *squidding* in swift tideways from a boat under sail in a stiffish breeze. — *Frank Forester*.

**TO SQUIGGLE.** To move about like an eel. New England. Often figuratively used in speaking of a man who evades a bargain as an eel eludes the grasp. — *Pickering*.

Forby's Glossary of Norfolk contains the word in the sense of "to shake a fluid about the mouth."

**SQUIRE.** The title of magistrates and lawyers. In New England it is given particularly to justices of the peace and judges. In Pennsylvania, to justices of the peace only. — *Webster*.

**TO SQUIRM.** To wriggle or twist about, as an eel. Provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

On the 7th January, 1859, the Hon. Mr. Pitt, of the Missouri legislature, is reported to have said in debate:

Mr. Speaker, this House passed resolutions, sir, to celebrate, in an appropriate manner, the 8th of January. We have declared an intention, and now, when we come to publish it, some gentleman is suddenly seized with the "retrenchment gripes," and *squirms* around like a long red worm on a pin-hook.

**SQUIRT.** A foppish young fellow; a whipper-snapper. A vulgar word.

If they won't keep company with *squirts* and dandies, who's going to make a monkey of himself? — *May Jones's Courtship*, p. 160.

He's a galvanized *squirt*, and, as the parson said, "the truth ain't in him." — *North's Slave of the Lamp*, p. 25.

**SQUIRTISH.** Dandified.

It's my opinion that these slicked-up *squirtish* kind a fellars ain't particular hard baked, and they always goes in for aristocracy notions. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 73.

**SQUUSH.** To crush. A vulgarism.

The next time I meet the critter, I'll take my stick and kill it — I'll *squush* it with my foot." — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

The following stanza is from a "Tender Lay" on a new-laid egg:



Ay — touch it with a tender touch,  
 For, till the egg is biled,  
 Who knows but that unwittingly  
 It may be smashed and spiled.  
 The summer breeze that 'gainst it blows,  
 Ought to be stilled and hushed ;  
 For eggs, like youthful purity,  
 Are "oiful" when they're *squashed*.

STAG. 1. In the New York courts, a *stag* is the technical name for a man who is always ready to aid in proving an alibi, of course "for a consideration."

2. In New England and elsewhere, a bullock. And so, too, in some parts of England.

STAG-DANCE. A dance performed by males only, in bar-rooms, etc. Also called a *bull-dance*.

The prisoners in the jail at Lafayette, Indiana, have been provided with a violin, and one of the number being a good player, they have frequent cotillions or *stag dances*, which have the advantage of being select, without the formality peculiar to entertainments in higher circles. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Nov 13, 1854

STAG-PARTY. A party consisting of males only.

I lose myself in a party of old bricks, who, under pretence of looking at the picture, are keeping up a small *stag-party* at the end of the room. — *Mace Stoper*, in *Knickerbocker Mag.*, April, 1856.

STAGE-DRIVER. A stage-coachman.

STAGING. Scaffolding. Used in New England, and, I believe, in other parts of the United States. — *Pickering*.

STAKE AND RIDER. A species of fence higher and stronger than a "worm fence."

TO STAKE OUT. To picket, as a horse, mule, etc.

He got all his fixins for camping — his little wallet and tin cup, and a big lariat to *stake out* his mule. — *Frontier Incident* (*N. Y. Spir. of Times*).

TO STALL. To stick fast in the mire, as a horse or carriage. The term is common in the South, and is noticed by Halliwell in his Dictionary of English provincialisms. In New England, "to set" is used in the same sense.

Now and then we halted to mend a broken tongue or axle, or help a *stalled* wagon from its miry bed. — *Capt. Reid, The Scalp-Hunter*, p. 18.

STAMPEDE. (Span. *estampado*, a stamping of feet.) A general scamper of animals on the Western prairies, usually caused by a fright. Mr. Kendall gives the following interesting account of one :

"A *stampede*!" shouted some of the old campaigners, jumping from the ground

and running towards their frightened animals; "a *stampede*! look out for your horses, or you'll never see them again!" was heard on every side.

It is singular the effect that sudden flight has not only upon horses, but oxen, on the prairies. The latter will, perhaps, run longer and further than the former; and although not as difficult to "head," because they cannot run so fast, their onward course it is impossible to stay. Oxen have been known to run forty miles without once stopping to look back. Not one in fifty of them has seen the least cause of fear, but each simply ran because his neighbor did. Frequent instances have occurred where some worthless but skittish horse has caused the loss of hundreds of valuable animals.

Nothing can exceed the grandeur of the scene when a large cavallada, or drove of horses, take a "scare." Old, weather-beaten, time-worn, and broken-down steeds — horses that have nearly given out from hard work or old age — will at once be transformed into wild and prancing colts. When first seized with that indescribable terror which induces them to fly, they seem to have been suddenly endowed with all the attributes of their original wild nature. With heads erect, tails and manes streaming in the air, eyes lit up, and darting beams of fright, old and jaded hacks will be seen prancing and careering about with all the buoyancy of action which characterizes the antics of young colts. The throng will sweep along the plain with a noise which may be likened to something between a tornado and an earthquake, and as well might feeble man attempt to arrest either of the latter.

Were the earth rending and cleaving beneath their feet, horses, when under the terrifying influence of a *stampede*, could not bound away with greater velocity or more majestic beauty of movement. — *Santa Fe Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 96.

About two hours before day there was a sudden *stampede*, or rush of horses, along the purlieus of the camp, with a snorting and a neighing and clattering of hoofs that started the rangers from their sleep. — *Irving's Tour to the Prairies*, p. 141.

Last night there occurred that dreaded calamity of the prairies, a *stampede* of the mules. The herd was quietly grazing, when suddenly a pony took fright, and, creating a panic among the animals, all fled. Their heavy tramping awoke us; and, seizing arms, we rushed out, thinking that Indians were the cause of the disturbance . . . For thirty-two miles they continued the pursuit, and then, overtaking the frightened horses that led the herd, turned them back. — *Capt. Whipple's Explorations for a Railroad to the Pacific*, p. 77.

From animals the term is transferred to men :

The boys leaped and whooped, flung their hats in the air, chased one another in a sort of *stampede*, etc. — *Margaret*, p. 120.

After him I went, and after me they came, and perhaps there was n't the awfulest *stampede* down three pair of stairs that ever occurred in Michigan! — *Field, Western Tales*.

The cause that led to the recent alarm [in Paris] was the *stampede* among the directors of that wonderful institution, the Credit Mobilier — *N. Y. Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 12, 1857

From information which has reached us, there would seem to have been a considerable *stampede* of slaves from the border valley counties of Virginia during the late Easter holidays — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Apr. 9, 1858.

To STAMPEDE. 1. To cause to scamper off in a fright.

Col. Snively was on the point of marching in pursuit of the Mexicans, when an

incident occurred which frustrated the purposes of the expedition. This was effected by a war party of Indians, who succeeded in *stamped* a large band of the army horses — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 268.

Orders were issued by Daniel H. Wells, styling himself "Lieutenant-General, Nauvoo Legion," to *stampede* the animals of the United States troops on their march, to set fire to their trains, to burn the grass, etc. — *President's Message*, Dec. 6, 1858.

## 2. To scamper off in a fright.

The Virginia Legislature, becoming frightened at the approach of the cholera, have finally *stamped* toward the White Sulphur Springs, there to legislate in the ball-room of the "principal hotel." — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 12, 1849.

**STAMPING-GROUND.** The scene of one's exploits, or favorite place of resort. South and West.

The little village of Hampton, Virginia, is a favorite *stamping-ground* for politicians. President Pierce spent a few days here early in the season. — *Cor. of the Baltimore Argus*.

At the dinner given to the Knight Templars of Virginia by their brethren in Providence, R. I., on the occasion of their visit, June 22, 1858, Sir Knight M. Kimball, one of the Committee from Boston, in response to the toast of "The City of Boston," said :

"For the present we won't brag much. We say as little as possible until we get the Virginia Knight Templars on our own *stamping-ground*. We don't propose to astonish them till we get them out of your [the R. I. Templars'] hands."

I went up to Mobile, and then to my old *stampin'-ground*, up again to the old State; and, after spending a week or so among my kin, made a bee-line for Washington. — *Piney Woods Tavern*, p. 41.

**STANCHEOUS.** Strong; durable. Western.

I tell you what, it's a mighty *stancheous* looking building, and looks far off at a distance when you're going up to it. — *May Jones's Courtship*, p. 33.

**STAND.** The situation of a store or place of business is called a *stand*; as "The Astor House is a good *stand* for a Hotel."

**TO STAND TREAT.** To consent to treat, or to be at the expense of treating a party to liquor.

I was never sold before, I vow; I cave in, and will *stand treat*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**TO STAND UP TO THE RACK.** A metaphorical expression of the same meaning as the like choice phrases, "to come to the scratch," "to toe the mark."

I begun a new campaign at Washington. I had hard work, but I *stood up to the rack*, fodder or no fodder. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 137.

It was the hottest night's work ever old Wolf undertook; and it took a mighty chance of hollerin' to make him *stand up to his rack* as well as he did. — *May Jones's Courtship*, p. 64.

STANDEE. A standing bed-place in a steamer.

STAR-APPLE. (*Chrysophyllum camito*.) A round, smooth skinned fruit, the size of a peach, with a soft pulp, and a number of glossy, brown seeds. The more common kinds of *star-apple* are the green skinned ones with white pulps, and the purple ones. West Indies.

STAR-PLUM. (*Chrysophyllum monopyrenum*.) A kind of star-apple, also called a Barbadoes Damson plum. Barbadoes.

STARS. 1. The officers of the new police in the city of New York are so called from their badge, a brass *star*, which is required by law to be worn on the breast.

The present system clothes with authority not only vicious men, but even convicts, because they have been of service to their party. Then it is that the "*star*," instead of being a terror to evil-doers, becomes the fear of good citizens. — *Report of Com. of Philad. Council on Police*, 1857.

2. A Southern pronunciation of the word *stairs*, like *bar* for *bear*; also heard in New England.

STARS AND STRIPES. The flag of the United States.

This flag was adopted by act of Congress on the 14th June, 1777, in the following words:

"*Resolved*, — That the flag of the thirteen United Colonies be thirteen stripes, alternately red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

It has been thought that the arms of Washington may have suggested the idea for the American flag. These arms contain three stars in the upper portion, and three bars running across the escutcheon. Other flags were used at different times during the Revolution, which are described by Mr. T. Westcott, of Philadelphia, in a communication with the London "*Notes and Queries*," for 1852, p. 10.

In March, 1775, a union flag with a red field was hoisted at New York, bearing the inscription, "George Rex and the Liberties of America," and upon the reverse "No Popery." On the 18th July, 1778, Gen. Putnam raised, at Prospect Hill, a flag bearing on one side the Massachusetts motto "*Qui transtulit sustinet*," on the other "An appeal to Heaven." In October of the same year the floating batteries at Boston had a flag with the latter motto, the field white with a pine-tree upon it. This was the Massachusetts emblem. Another flag, used during 1775 in some of the Colonies, had upon it a rattlesnake coiled as if about to strike, with the motto, "Don't tread on me." The grand union flag of thirteen stripes was raised on the heights near Boston, January 2, 1776. The British Annual Register of 1776, says: "They burnt the King's speech and

changed their colors from a red ground, which they had hitherto used, to a flag with thirteen stripes, as a symbol of the number and union of the colonies." The idea of making a stripe for each State was adopted from the first; and the fact goes far to negative the supposition that the private arms of General Washington had any thing to do with it. The pine-tree, the rattlesnake, and the striped flag, were used indiscriminately until July, 1777, when the blue union with the stars was added to the stripes, and the flag established by law. Formerly a new stripe was added for each new State admitted to the union, until the flag became too large, when, by act of Congress, the stripes were reduced to the old thirteen; and now a star is added to the union at the accession of each new State.

**STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.** The flag of the United States. The term was first given to the American flag by Francis S. Key, in his beautiful song, now become a national one, which bears that title. The circumstances connected with the composition of this song are given by Chief Justice Taney, the brother-in-law of Mr. Key, in a letter which accompanied a late edition of the poems of that writer. The following is condensed from it:

"In the campaign of the British, during the war of 1812, when they destroyed the Capitol at Washington and the battle of Bladensburg took place, Dr. Beanes, a leading physician of Upper Marlboro', was taken from his bed at midnight, by a detachment of soldiers sent for the purpose, and without even allowing him to put his clothes on, was hurried off to the British camp.

"Measures were immediately taken to procure the release of Dr. Beanes, who had been sent down to the fleet which lay in the Chesapeake. Mr. Key, who was an intimate friend of the Doctor, volunteered to accompany Mr. Skinner, an agent for the government for flags of truce and exchange of prisoners.

"After much solicitation Mr. Key succeeded in getting an order to release the Doctor, but they were told that they must remain with the fleet until after the attack on Baltimore, then about to be made. They were then transferred to their own vessels, accompanied by a guard of marines to prevent them from landing, and fortunately anchored in a position which enabled them to see the flag of Fort McHenry. The party remained on deck during the whole night, watching every shell, from the moment it was fired until it fell, listening with breathless interest to hear if an explosion followed.

"While the bombardment continued, it was sufficient proof that the fort had not surrendered. But it suddenly ceased, when they became alarmed and paced the deck the remainder of the night in painful suspense, watch-

ing with intense anxiety for the return of day. At length the light came; they saw that "our flag was still there," and soon after learned that the attack had failed. Mr. Key, Mr. Skinner, and Dr. Beanes were then permitted to land where they pleased.

"Under the excitement of the time, Mr. Key, as he stated to Judge Taney, commenced the song of '*The Star-Spangled Banner*' on the deck of their vessel, in the fervor of the moment, when he saw the enemy retreating to their ships, and looked at the flag he had watched for so anxiously, as the morning opened. A few lines he had scratched on the back of a letter which he had in his pocket, some he preserved in his mind, and finished it in the boat on his way to the shore. Arriving at the hotel, he wrote it out as it now stands. The next morning he showed the lines to Judge Nicholson, who was much pleased with them, and immediately sent them to a printer, where the poem was struck off in hand-bills, and most favorably received by the people of Baltimore:

"Oh! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming;  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;  
Oh! say, does that *star-spangled banner* yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

STARE-CAT. A woman or girl who amuses herself with gazing at her neighbors. A woman's word.

STATE. A large district of country having a separate government, but confederated with other States, as one of the members or *States* of the American Union. — *Worcester*.

STATES RIGHTS. The rights of the several independent States, as opposed to the authority of the Federal government.

Having been all my life, and being still, an ardent "*States-rights*" man, — believing *States rights* to be an essential, nay, the essential, element of the Constitution, and that no one who thinks otherwise can stand on the same constitutional platform that I do, it seems to me that I am, and all those with whom I act habitually are, if Democrats at all, true "*States-rights* Democrats." — *Speech of Hon. J. H. Hammond*, Oct. 27, 1858.

TO STAVE. 1. To break a hole in; to break; to burst; as "to *stave* a cask." — *Webster*. This is the legitimate use of the verb; but sometimes we make it govern the instrument directly, as in the following example:

I'll *stave* my fist right through you, and carry you on my elbow, as easily as if you were an empty market-basket. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

2. To hurry; to press forward.

A president of one of our colleges once said to a graduate at parting, "My son, I want to advise you. Never oppose public opinion. The great world will *stave* right on!" — *Am. Review*, June, 1848.

Hilloa! Steve! where are you *staving* to? If you're for Wellington, scale up here and I'll give you a ride. — *Mrs Clavers's Forest Life*.

And so the Yankee *staves* along  
Full chisel, hitting right or wrong,  
And makes the burden of his song

"By golly!" — *Home Journal*.

**STEAL** (pronounced *stail*). The handle of various implements; as a *rake-steal*, a *fork-steal*. Used by the farmers in some parts of New England. Provincial in various parts of England. — *Pickering*.

**STEAMBOAT**. A term used at the West to denote a dashing, go-a-head character.

Mrs. Stowe, while in England, met Archbishop Whately, of whom she thus speaks:

There is a kind of brusque humor in his address, a downright heartiness, which reminds one of Western character. If he had been born in our latitude, in Kentucky or Wisconsin, the natives would have called him Whately, and said he was a real *steamboat* on an argument. — *Sunny Memories*.

The renowned Colonel Crockett, while asleep on a stump, got caught in the crotch of a tree and held fast, where he was attacked by eagles, which attempted to pull out his long hair to build their nests with.

"In a few minutes I heered a voice," says the Colonel, "and then a gal come running up, and axed what was the matter. . . . I telled her, that if she would drive off the eagles, I would make her a present of an iron comb."

"That I will," says she, "for I am a she *steamboat*, and have doubled up a crocodile in my day."

**STEAM DOCTOR**. See *Thompsonian Doctor*.

**STEAM PADDY**. A steam earth-excavator, much used in making excavations in sand or loose soil for railways. So called from its taking the place of a number of Irish laborers.

The soil was so sandy that the hills were easily cut down, and for this purpose a contrivance was used called a *steam Paddy*, which did immense execution. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 80.

**STEBY, SEBOY**. A word used to set dogs upon pigs or other animals.

"There it is — that black and white thing — on that log," says Tom. "*Stebey*, catch him!" says he [to the dog]. Ben run up with his light, and the first thing I heard him say was, "Peugh! oh, my Lord! look out, fellers, it's a pole-cat." — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 55.

**STEER**. Great, magnificent, extravagant. A newly coined slang term, equivalent to *tall*.

At the election in Minnesota, one hundred and ten Winnebago Indians, wearing their blankets, voted the Democratic ticket; but the agent thought this was rather *steep*, so he afterwards crossed that number from the list. — *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 17, 1857.

The verdict by twelve of seventeen of a jury giving \$150,000 as damages to a Land and Water-Power Company, at the Great Falls of the Potomac, through the diversion to the Washington Aqueduct of one eighteenth of the water at lowest stage, is regarded as decidedly *steep*. — (*Balt*) *Sun*, Aug. 23, 1858.

**STEMMERY.** A large building in which tobacco is stemmed, that is, in which the thin part of the leaf is stripped from the fibrous veins that run through it. Kentucky and Missouri.

**STERN-WHEEL.** The shallow rivers of the West are navigated by small steamboats with a wheel at the stern instead of side-wheels, which are used only in the larger steamers. Hence the term is applied to any thing small, petty; as, a "*stern-wheel church*." Comp. *One-Horse*.

**STERN-WHEELER.** A steamboat fitted up with a stern-wheel. Western.

Squire Blaze served for a long time as first mate on a raft, but grew ambitious for higher distinction. Next he got possession of a *starn-wheeler*, and entered the pine-knot business, the pursuit of which took him so high up Red River, that he got clean out of the way of taxes. — *Remembrances of the Mississippi*. *Harper's Mag.*

A Southern editor wishes to say that the Mississippi is very low. How does he say it? "The cat-fish are rigging up *stern-wheelers*." — *Speech of the Hon. S. H. Cox*, Sept. 1857.

**To STICK.** To take in; to impose upon; to cheat in trade. "I'm *stuck* with a counterfeit note;" "He went to a horse sale, and got *stuck* with a spavined jade."

As soon as the whole class of small speculators perceived they had been *stuck*, they all shut their mouths; no one confessing the ownership of a share. — *A Week in Wall Street*, p. 47.

Very often is a client *stuck* for a heavy bill of costs, which he would have saved but for the ignorance of his attorney. — *Newspaper*.

**STICK-CHIMNEY.** In newly settled parts of the country, where log-houses form the first habitations of the settlers, the chimneys are made with sticks from one to two inches square, and about two feet in length, which are laid crosswise and cemented with clay or mud. The fire-places are built of rough stone, and the *stick-chimneys* are merely the conductors of the smoke.

The *stick-chimney* was, like its owner's hat, open at the top, and jammed in at the sides — *Mrs Clavers's Western Clearings*, p. 7.

**STICKER.** An article of merchandise which sticks by the dealer, and does not meet with a ready sale, is technically called a *sticker*.

**STIFF.** A dead body, in the language of the "resurrectionists," is called a *stiff*.



**STILL-BAITING.** Fishing with a deep line in one spot, as distinguished from trolling.

**STILL-HUNTER.** A stalker of game. Western.

The *still-hunter* must needs be upon his guard ; for the wounded buffalo is prone to make battle, upon the too near approach of his enemy. — *Gregg, Com. of Prairies*, Vol. II. p. 219.

**STILL-HUNTING.** Walking noiselessly through the woods, keeping a bright look-out, and searching for game in the haunts where they are wont to browse in the daytime.

*Still-hunting* buffalo is approaching or stalking, by taking advantage of the wind and any cover the ground affords, and crawling within shooting distance of the feeding herd. — *Ruxton, Adventures in N. Mexico*, p. 285.

What is called *still-hunting* among our frontiersmen is not practised among the Indians. — *Sibley's Western Prairies*.

**STINGAREE.** A corruption of *sting-ray*, the name of a fish.

**STINKSTONE.** Swine-stone, a variety of carbonate of lime, which emits a fetid odor on being struck. — *Dana*.

**STINKWEED.** See *Jamestown Weed*.

**STINTED.** Often substituted for *stunted*.

**TO STITCH.** To form land into ridges. New England. — *Webster*.

**TO STIVE UP.** To make hot, sultry, close. An English expression, but now more used, it is believed, in this than in the old country.

"Oh, marcy on us," said a fat lady who was looking for a house, "this 'll never do for my family at all. There's no convenience about it, only one little *stived up* closet. . . . And the bed-rooms—she would as soon sleep in a pig-pen, and done with it, as to get into such little, mean, *stived up* places as them." — *Downing, May-day in New York*.

**TO STIVER.** To run ; to move off. A low word used in the Northern States.

**TO STOCK.** To *stock* land means, with us, to supply land, not only with animals, but also with seed ; as, "My farm is *stocked* with clover."

**STOCK-MINDER.** One who takes care of cattle on the great prairies.

**STOCK-RANGE.** The prairie or plain where cattle range or graze.

When any person or persons may hunt estrays in another *stock-range*, he or they shall notify the owner or stock-minder of said stock his or their intention or object.

**STOCK-TRAIN.** A train of railroad cars loaded with cattle.

**STOCKING-FEET.** To be in one's *stocking-feet* is to have only one's stockings on, to have one's shoes off.

**STOCKY.** Short and thick. A west of England expression, used in New England.

He's rather a *stocky* man; and I'm nothing but a shadow, as it were. — *Brooke's Eastford*.

**STONE-BEE.** An assemblage of farmers or villagers for the purpose of clearing stones from a neighbor's piece of land. See *Bee*.

At Ridgefield we used to have *stone-bees*, when all the men of a village or hamlet came together with their draft cattle, and united to clear some patch of earth which was covered with an undue quantity of stones and rocks. — *Goodrich, Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 75.

**STONE-BRUISE.** A hurt or sore on the sole of the foot among those who go without shoes, such as children and negroes, in the Western States. The same term is used in Ireland.

**STONE-ROOT.** (*Collinsonia canadensis*.) A plant used in medicine. Its properties are diuretic and stomachic. It is also called Rich Weed.

**STONE-TOTER.** A name often given to the Mullet (*Catostomus nigricans*) of the Middle States, and to other species of *Cyprinidæ*.

The most singular fish in this part of the world is called the *Stone-toter*, whose brow is surmounted with several little sharp horns, by the aid of which he *totes* small flat stones from one part of the brook to another more quiet, in order to make a snug little inclosure for his lady to lie in in safety. — *Paulling, Lett. from the South*.

**STOOL.** An artificial duck or other water-fowl used as a decoy. They are much used on Long Island and elsewhere in duck shooting.

**STOOLING.** Decoying ducks or other fowl by the means of "stools."

**STOOL-PIGEON.** A decoy robber, in the pay of the police, who brings his associates into a trap laid for them.

**STOOL-PIGEONING.** The practice of employing decoys to catch robbers.

**STOOP.** (Dutch, *stoep*.) The steps at the entrance of a house; door-steps. It is also applied to a porch with seats, a piazza, or balustrade. This, unlike most of the words received from the Dutch, has extended, in consequence of the uniform style of building that prevails throughout the country, beyond the bounds of New York State, as far as the backwoods of Canada.

In portly gabardine and bulbous multiplicity of breeches, the Dutch burgher sat on his *stoep*, and smoked his pipe in lordly silence. — *Knickerbocker's New York*, p. 385.

About nine o'clock all three of us passed up Wall street, on the *stoops* of which no small portion of its tenants were already seated. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 69.

Nearly all the houses [in Albany] were built with their gables to the street, and each had heavy wooden Dutch *stoops*, with seats at the door. — *Ibid.* p. 161.

There was a large two story house, having a long *stoop* in front. — *Margaret*, p. 63.

The roses fall, the daisies droop,  
And all about the ancient *stoop*  
The eager sparrows soar and swoop.

*Nora Perry, The Legend of Moorland Hall.*

I shall step back to my party within the *stoop*. — *Backwoods of Canada*.

The *stoop* is up, and I have just planted hops at the base of the pillars. — *Ibid.*  
p 309.

**TO STOP.** To stay, to abide temporarily; as, "When you come to New York, *stop* with me instead of going to a hotel."

Those who remain at home know little of the newer portions of our country, and of the primeval style of living. I recently *stopped* with a friend on court-day.

The court-house was of logs, without a floor, etc. — *Corresp. of Newark Daily Adv.*

**STORE.** In the United States and Canada shops of every kind for the sale of goods, whether at wholesale or retail, are commonly called *stores*. Thus we have dry goods *stores*, shoe *stores*, book *stores*, hardware *stores*, etc. etc. This use of the word, whose proper meaning is a magazine or storehouse where merchandise or movable property is kept, seems to arise from that tendency to the magniloquent with which Americans have been charged. The word *shop* is thus almost wholly discarded, except in the sense of workshop.

**STORE CLOTHES, STORE GOODS.** Clothing or other articles purchased at a store, as opposed to those which are home made. These phrases are used only in out of the way sections of the country. Comp. *Boughten*.

**STOREKEEPER.** In America a man who has the care of a store or warehouse; a shopkeeper. The officer who has charge of the government warehouse, where property to the value of millions is deposited for inspection or for safe-keeping, is a *storekeeper*; so too is the man who stands behind the counter of a paltry shop, and deals out yards of tape and papers of pins.

**STORE PAY.** Payment made for produce or other articles purchased, by goods from a store, instead of cash. This is a common way of buying produce in the country. Sometimes a dealer agrees to pay half in cash and half out of his store, i. e. in *store pay*.

See, a girl has just arrived with a pot of butter to trade off for *store pay*. She wants in exchange a yard of calico, a quarter of tea, a quart of molasses, some radish seed, a plug of tobacco, two pipes, a fine-tooth comb, a salt mackerel, a dose of rhubarb, two sticks of candy, and a bottle of rum. — *Capt. Priest's Adventures*, p. 54.

**STORM.** A violent wind; a tempest. Thus, "a *storm* of wind" is correct language, as the proper sense of the word is rushing, violence. It has primarily no reference to a fall of rain or snow; but, as a violent wind is

often attended with rain or snow, the word *storm* has come to be used, most improperly, for a fall of rain or snow without wind. — *Webster*.

**TO STORM.** To blow with violence; impersonally, as, *it storms*. — *Webster*. We use it improperly in the sense of to rain or to snow.

**STORY.** A floor; a flight of rooms. — *Johnson*. In the United States the floor next the ground is the first *story*. In England, what we call the "second *story*" is called the "first floor."

**STRADDLE-BUG.** The popular name for a beetle. In the Isle of Wight the cockroach is called a *straddle-bob*.

Shew me the man who does not delight in the departure of winter, and I will exhibit to you one who, as Sheepspear says, is "fit for treacle, *straddle-bugs*, and spooks." — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 194.

**STRAIGHT.** 1. Even or uniform in quality. A term used in commerce, and particularly among flour-dealers, as, "A thousand barrels of Rochester flour, *straight*, brought \$5," meaning that the thousand barrels were all alike, or that the same brand ran *straight* through.

2. Pure, genuine, undiluted, uncontaminated.

My glass of brandy, which should have been *straight*, was surreptitiously diluted with Croton water. — *Doesticks*.

In the presidential contest of 1844 no man was more fierce in his hostility to Henry Clay than the present candidate of the *straight* Whigs for the Vice-Presidency. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*, Sept, 1856.

The *straight* Republican Convention is to meet to-morrow. Mr. Sumner's anti-slavery opinions are very strong, and this would seem to lead to the conclusion that he is with the *straights*. — *N. Y. Times*, Oct. 14, 1857.

**STRAIGHT OUT.** Pure; genuine; unsophisticated.

Anne was indignant with that *straight out* and generous indignation which belongs to women, who are ready to follow their principles to any result with more inconsiderate fearlessness than men. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 319.

We feel what a blessed thing it is just now to be a *straight-out* Whig, sitting calm on tumult's wheel. — *N. Y. Commercial Adv.*, May, 1856.

**STRAIGHT-SPOKEN.** Plain-spoken; downright; candid.

I'm not a going to spoil the appearance of heaven by foolishly attempting to garmsh it with artificial flowers, nor to blacken hell till it shines like a new polished boot. Not I. I'm a *straight-spoken* preacher. — *Dow's Sermons*.

I'm a *straight spoken* kind o' creetur,

That blurts right out what's in his head;

And if I've one peculiar feature,

It is a nose that wont be led. — *Biglow Papers*, p. 88.

**STRAIGHT AS A LOON'S LEG,** is a common simile in New England.

They were puzzled with the accounts; but I saw through it in a minit, and made it all as *straight as a loon's leg*. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 42.

STRAIGHT UP AND DOWN. Plain ; candid ; honest.

If there was any thing wanting to prove that lawyers were not *straight up and down* in their dealings, that would do it. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature.*

STRAIN, instead of *sprain*, is frequently heard. "I have *strained* my ankle."

STRAND. 1. The Dutch on the Hudson River apply the term to a landing-place ; as, the *strand* at Kingston. — *Webster.*

2. In the South the word *strand* denotes a fibre, as a hair of the head, beard, etc.

STRANGER. It is the common practice in the Western States to accost a person whose name is not known, by this title. In England, for example, a person would say, "Can you tell me, sir, if this is the road to B?" At the West he would say, "*Stranger*, is this the road?" etc.

Under the benign influence of the Christian religion, a civilization was growing up in the world which had carried modern nations far beyond the boasted refinement of ancient Greece and Rome. With them the word "*stranger*" was synonymous with "enemy;" but among us, "*stranger*" was but another name for "friend." — *Speech of R. H. Coxe, Washington.*

STRAP. A razor-strop is, with us, generally called a razor-*strap*.

STRAPPED. Tight ; hard up for money.

John Scroggins, at 2 P. M., is on the hunt for the wherewithal to pay a note in bank. He meets Jere. Lowndes, who looks cheerful, as though he may have a few hundred. Scroggins tries him. No go. Lowndes is *strapped* ; had to pay his wife's cousin's last quarter's rent, which consumed what he had reserved for current expenses, when he made his last purchase of stocks. — *Nat. Intelligencer, Oct., 1857.*

STRAW BAIL. Worthless bail ; bail given by "men of straw," i. e. persons who pretend to the possession of property, but have none.

There is a class of pettifoggers about the N. Y. Tombs who are in league with the police justices to get all the money they can out of their victims, and having divided the spoils the culprits are sent forth unwhipped of justice. Taking *straw-bail* is the favorite dodge. The "*shyster*" is permitted to visit him or her, and with a tongue practised in the art, he dwells upon the chances the prisoner runs of Sing Sing prison, adding that for a consideration, he (the *shyster*) might effect a liberation. If the prisoner has money, it is paid at once. The magistrate having received his share, a "man of straw" is taken as bail, and the prisoner is discharged. — (*Wash. Evening Star.*)

Among the host of other evils which have been suffered to exist in the administration of our criminal laws for years past, the practice of taking irresponsible persons for bail has been one which has probably most interfered with the course of justice. Like the professional juror, "*straw-bail*" had become a regular trade, and its purpose was to get desperate criminals out of the hands of the law. It involved the crime of perjury of course, but there are rascals enough ready to commit perjury for pay, and the more desperate the case against the criminal, the less willing are

his friends to run the risks of trial. Hundreds of criminals have escaped the punishment due to their offences through this abuse. — *Philadelphia Ledger*, 1858.

**STREAK.** A vein ; a turn. Applied to mental peculiarities.

Just act, now, as if you had got a *streak* of something in you, such as a man ought for to have who is married to one of the very first families in old Virginia. — *Mrs Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 120.

"I hope you don't mean to insinuate that I'm queer, do you, Mellissy?"

"O no, Priscille, I didn't mean to insinuate that, but then you know almost everybody has their queer *streaks*." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 121.

**STREAKED, or STREAKY.** "To feel *streaked*" is to feel confused, alarmed.

I begun to feel *streaked* enough for our folks, when I see what was done on Boston Common. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 18.

Oh, what a beautiful sight the ocean is when there aint no land in sight! There we was in a little shell at the mercy of them big waves, higher than father's barn. I never did feel so *streaky* and mean afore; talk of a grain of sand, why I felt like a starved speck of dust cut up into homœopathic doses for a child two minits old. — *Hiram Bigelow, Letter in Family Companion*.

Gen. Tell the truth; keep back nothing; I promised no harm shall happen you.

*Doolittle.* Oh, I'll tell all now; I won't stay to be hanged first! Oh, the good gracious suzz! how *streaked* I feel all over! — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

But when it comes to bein' killed, I tell ye I felt *streaked*,

The fust time 't ever I found out why bayonets wuz peaked. —

*Lovell, Biglow Papers*.

Daniel Webster was a great man, I tell you; he'd talk King William out of sight in half an hour. If he was in your house of Commons, he'd make some of your great folks look pretty *streaked*. — *Sam Slick*, 1st Series.

**TO STREAK, or TO STREAK IT,** is to run as fast as possible.

O'er hill and dale with fury she did dreel,

A' roads to her were good and bad alike;

Nane o't she wyl'd, but forward on did *streak*. — *Ross's Helenore*.

I was certain it was n't no fox or wolf, but a dog; and if I did n't *streak* off like greased lightnin'. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 78.

I *streaked* it for Washington, and it was wellnigh upon midnight when I reached the White House — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 91.

When I did get near, he'd stop and look, cock his ears, and give a snuff, as if he'd never seen a man afore, and then *streak* it off as if I had been an Indian. — *Porter's Tales of the South-West*, p. 165.

As soon as I touched land I *streaked* it for home, as hard as I could lay legs to the ground. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 59.

'T was a satisfaction to have such a horse, and 'twas a pleasure to crop him, and *streak* it away, at a brushing canter, for a good five miles at a stretch. — *Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 85.

What brings a duck a *streaking* it down stream if humans aint behind her? and who's in these diggings but Indians?—*Ruxton, Far West*, p. 79.

How many do I see around me, that willingly permit the worm of corruption to gnaw at their already moth-eaten morals! Ah! their name is Legion, and the way they are *streaking* it down the dark road to ruin, is sorrowful to steam locomotives. —*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 108.

**STREAKED BASS.** Striped bass. New England.

**STRETCH.** *On a stretch* is continuously; without cessation.

Chunky used to whistle three days and nights *on a stretch*.—*Traits of American Humor*.

**STRETCHER.** 1. A well-burnt and smooth brick used for fronts of buildings. Under-burnt bricks are called *salmon* bricks from their light color; and over-burnt and partially vitrified bricks are called *arch and pillar* bricks, from their position in the kiln.

2. A falsehood. Colloquial in England and with us.

Whenever Mrs. Oscar Dust told a *stretcher*, old Waters was expected to swear to it. — *Field, Drama at Pokerville*

**STRICKEN.** "This ancient participle," says Mr. Pickering, "is much used in Congress and our other legislative assemblies. A member moves that certain parts of a bill should be *stricken* out," etc. — *Vocabulary*.

The use of the word referred to by Mr. Pickering is peculiar to us, though there are examples of its occasional use in England applied in other ways.

Many of the foreigners were much *stricken* with the splendor of the scene. — *London Statesman*, June 10, 1814.

**STRIKE.** An instrument with a straight edge for levelling a measure, a strickle. — *Worcester*. To sell *by the strike*, is not to heap up the article, as is usually done with potatoes, apples, etc., but to scrape off what is above the level of the top, as in selling grain, salt, or the like. In Massachusetts it is provided that,

Cranberries and all other berries shall be sold *by the strike* or level measure, the same as flax-seed and other similar articles are measured. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

**STRIKER.** A bruiser; a ruffian.

**STRING.** 1. A row; number; lot.

Here's a whole *string* of Whig Congressmen elected by the State of New York. — *New York Tribune*.

2. A common name among teamsters for a whip.

With some judicious touches of the *string*, the horses are induced to struggle as for their lives. — *Mrs. Clavers, A New Home*, p. 9.

**STRING-BEANS.** The common name for French beans; so called from the

string-like fibre stripped from the side of the pod in preparing it for the table. See *Bush-bean*.

**STRIPE.** Pattern, kind, sort.

Den, if he was of de right *stripe* he went straight to glory, and is now a shoutin' halleluyah wid de great congregation in de New Jerusalem. — *Emma Bartlett*.

The call of the Soft-shell Convention was signed by twelve men of the Free-Soil Buffalo *stripe*. — *N Y. Herald*, July 7, 1856.

The Yankee, though cosmopolite in general and personally polite in particular, cherishes at heart a great sympathy for his own *stripe*, even when he hides it, like the ground work of a rising speculation, from the world. — *Mace Sloper, in Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**STRIPED BASS.** (*Labrax lineatus*.) One of the most highly esteemed fishes of the Atlantic coast, called also Streaked Bass and Rock fish.

**STRIPED GROUND SQUIRREL.** See *Chipmunk*.

**STRONG.** *To go it strong*, means to do a thing with energy or perseverance. See *Go it strong*.

The pilot on duty above; another was calling out the Captain, who *went it strong* at cards. — *Poiter's Tales of the South-West*, p. 107.

You should go it, remarked Spifflekins, *go it strong*, that's the way to scatter the blue devils, *go it strong*. — *Neal's Peter Ploddy*, p. 46.

**STRUCK UNDER CONVICTION.** Impressed with a sense of personal sinfulness.

**TO STUB, or STUMP.** "To *stub* one's toe," is to strike it against any thing in walking or running. An expression often used by boys and others who go barefoot.

Lives there a Yankee  
Who, if he *stubs his toe* and fall,  
Don't want to swear, but, great or small,  
Will vent his ire with, "Damn it all!  
By golly!" — *Yankee Philosophy*

**STUCK.** 1. *To be stuck*, is to be stuck fast, unable to proceed.

My dear hearers, I'm *stuck* to begin with. When I want ideas, they never come, they are off playing truant. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

2. To be taken in; to be taken advantage of in a trade. To be *stuck with* a thing, is to have an unsalable article foisted upon one.

We're the only Eastern folks in the Yonkville Stock, unless Mr. Sloper will take a few shares, and of course anybody else may be *stuck* and be darned. — *Muce Sloper, in Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

We got *stuck* with a bad lot of paper, and were obliged to stick it on to our readers. — *Providence Journal*.

**TO STUFF.** To quiz.



**STUFFENING.** Stuffing; seasoning for meat or poultry, usually made of bread and herbs to give it a higher relish. Western.

By way of amends [for the dried up turkey] quarts of gravy were judiciously emptied on our plates from the wash-basin bowls. That also moistened the *stuffenn* composed of Indian meal and sausages. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I p. 182.

**STUFFY.** Angry or sulky; obstinate. Colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

**STUMP.** The part of a tree remaining in the earth after the tree is cut down. This, in the Western countries, was made use of as the most convenient stand from which to address the people. Hence, *to take the stump* is to go on an electioneering campaign.

**TO STUMP.** 1. To challenge. Also to puzzle, confound.

Dabbs turns up his nose at betting. Instead of *stumping* his antagonist by launching out his cash, he shakes a portentous fist under his nose, and the affair is settled. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

When you see Lord Sydenham, *stump* him; and ask him, when a log is hewed and squared, if he can tell the tenth side of it — *Sam Slick*.

Heavens and earth! thinks I, what does all this mean? I knowed I had n't done any thing to be put in prison for, and I never was so *stumped*. — *May, Jones's Courtship*, p. 135.

I put a conundrum to them. They were all *stumpt*, and gave it up. — *Crockett's Tour*.

2. *To stump it*, is a cant phrase signifying to make electioneering speeches in favor of oneself. — *Worcester*. This is a term borrowed from the backwoods, where the stump of a tree often supplies the place of the English hustings.

While I was at Peoria, Illinois, I heard a political speech from General Shields, who was at that time *stumping it* through the State, as a candidate for the Senate in place of Mr. Breese. — *Lett. from Illinois, N. Y. Com. Adv.*

It is understood that Col. Benton intends *to stump* the State [of Missouri] as a candidate for the gubernatorial chair. — *New York Courier*.

**STUMP ORATOR.** A man who harangues the people from the stump of a tree or other elevation.

**STUMP ORATORY.** The sort of popular speaking used by stump orators.

**STUMP SPEAKER.** A popular political speaker.

The Hon. W. R. Thompson of Indiana, one of the most popular *stump speakers* of the day, addressed a large meeting of Whigs from the stoop of Barnum's Hotel, Baltimore, in support of the nominations of the late Whig Convention. — *Letter from Washington, N. Y. Herald*, June 21, 1848.

**STUMP SPEECH.** A speech made from a stump or other elevation; i. e. an

electioneering speech in favor of one's self or some other political candidate.

We had of course a passion for stump speaking. But I recollect, we often mount the stump only figuratively; and very good *stump speeches* are delivered from a table, a chair, a whiskey-barrel, and the like. Sometimes we make the best *stump speeches* on horseback. — *Cullon, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 211.

When you see a politician extra full of patriotism, and stuffed with *stump speeches*, you may take it for granted he wants office either for himself or for some particular friend. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 132.

**STUMPAGE.** The sum paid to owners of land for the privilege of cutting the timber growing thereon. State of Maine.

**STUMPER.** A puzzler.

My note was a *stumper* to Sally; so she got Jess to explain it, and the way he did it was enormous. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**STUN**, for *stone*, so pronounced in the back parts of New England.

Captain Stone, I've been clean away amongst the Yankees, where they call your name *Stunn*. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 145.

**STURTION.** A common pronunciation for *nasturtium*.

**TO STUTTER.** To saunter lazily, with a slipshod movement. This is not a common word. I have never met with it except in the example quoted.

I *stuttered* up to No. 4 yesterday after the funeral, but they are so grown over with rum there, you can hardly tell what is nater and what is not. — *Margaret*, p. 327.

**SUANT, or SUEUT.** Even; uniform; spread equally over the surface. Provincial in England. — *Holloway*. Used by farmers in some parts of New England, and applied thus: "The grain is sowed *suant*," i. e. evenly; regularly. — *Pickering*.

**SUCCESSION SALE.** A sale of property to enable the heirs to divide the same.

At the *succession sale* of the slaves belonging to the minor heirs of S. A. and A. X. Baillie, at the court-house [of Rapides], on Saturday, 17th inst., long sums were bid. — *Louisiana Democrat*, July 20, 1858.

**SUCK IN, or SUCK.** A cheat, deception.

Heaven forbid that I should utter a syllable of complaint; but I can't help saying it confidentially, and before man alone, that life is all moonshine — a monstrous humbug — a grand *suck in*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 316.

**TO SUCK IN.** To take in; to cheat; to deceive. A figurative expression, probably drawn from a sponge, which sucks up water. *To be sucked in*, is to be "sponged" out of one's money, or to be cheated in a bargain. It is a low expression, though often heard, and is understood by all.

"I an't bound to drive nobody in the middle of the night," said the driver; "so you don't try to *suck* me in there." — *Mr. Chivers's Forest Life*, Vol. I p. 109

Who was the first unfortunate speculator? Jonah. Ah! why? Because he got *sucked in*! — *Newspaper*

**SUCKATASH, or SUCCOTASH.** (Narraganset Ind., *msickquataash*, corn boiled whole.) Green Indian corn and beans boiled together. It is a favorite dish wherever these plants are cultivated.

Joel Barlow, in his poem on *Hasty-pudding*, thus compares *succotash* with it:

Let the green *succotash* with thee contend,  
Let beans and corn their sweetest juices lend;  
Not all the plate, how fam'd soe'er it be,  
Can please my palate like a bowl of thee. — *Canto I.* p. 6.

At the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of Rhode Island, held in Providence, 1836, an Indian banquet in the style of those of the olden time was given.

An Indian mat being spread out, a large wooden platter well filled with boiled bass graced the centre, supported on one side by a wooden dish of parched corn, and on the other by a similar one of *succotash*. — *Stone's Life of Howland*, p. 262.

The wise Hunon is welcome; he is come to eat his *succotash* with his brothers of the lakes! — *Cooper, The Last of the Mohicans*, p. 426.

**SUCKER.** 1. A tube used for sucking sherry cobbler. They are made of silver, glass, straw, or sticks of macaroni.

2. A very common fish of the genus *labeo*, and of which there are many varieties, including the Chub, Mullet, Barbel, Horned Dace, etc. They are found in most of the lakes and rivers of North America.

3. A greenhorn; an ignorant clown. Western.

I had n't time to load my gun before the bear gathered upon him like a Virginny blood-mare, and the nigger give himself up for a gone *sucker*, and faunted away. — *Crockett's Bear Adventure*.

4. A hard drinker; a drunkard.

5. A mean, low fellow; a sponger.

Of the scaly tribe I may mention those *suckers* belonging to the body loaferish, that never rise to the surface of respectability, whose sole study appears to be to see how much they can get without the least physical exertion. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

6. A nickname applied throughout the West to a native of Illinois. The origin of this term is as follows:

The Western prairies are, in many places, full of the holes made by the crawfish, which descends to the water beneath. In early times, when travellers wended their way over these immense plains, they very prudently provided themselves with a long hollow weed, and when thirsty, thrust it into these natural artesian, and thus easily supplied their long-

ings. The crawfish-well generally contains pure water, and the manner in which the traveller drew forth the refreshing element gave him the name of "*Sucker*." — *Lett. from Illinois, in Providence Journal*.

A band of music was sent thirty miles to wake up the sleepy *suckers*, and draw them, by the magic of their music, to the Douglas gathering at Quincy, Illinois. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1854.

SUGAR APPLE. See *Sweetsop*.

SUGAR BERRY. See *Hackberry*.

SUGAR BUSH. A collection of trees of the sugar maple, generally in the midst of a primitive forest, where maple-sugar is made by boiling the sap of the tree. These are sometimes called *sugar orchards*.

Going into the *sugar bush* has something of the excitement which the forester loves so well to mingle with all his work — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

SUGAR CAMP. The place where the sap is collected from a sugar bush and boiled.

SUGAR MAPLE. (*Acer saccharinum*.) A handsome forest tree from fifty to eighty feet high, from the sap of which is made the well known *maple sugar*. The wood is valuable for fuel; and accidental varieties of it are the *bird's-eye maple* and *curled maple* of cabinet-makers.

Some verses on the Corn-plant and Sugar Maple, in Putnam's Magazine, end thus:

But if our brothers break the chain,  
We'll hang by our own staples;  
Three cheers we'll raise for Indian Corn,  
And nine for *Sugar Maples*.

SUGAR ORCHARD. A collection of maple trees selected and preserved in the forest for the purpose of making sugar therefrom. Comp. *Sugar Bush*.

SUGAR TREE. The name much used in the West for the sugar maple, in which connection the word maple is never used. Thus, in purchasing firewood, it is usual to bargain for hickory, sugar, ash, etc.

SUIT. In the Middle and Southern States especially, a head of hair is called, queerly enough, a "*suit of hair*," as in the following description by Dr. J. S. Cartwright, of New Orleans, of a "strong-minded woman."

Her head was large, and features prominent and rather masculine. But in every other respect her appearance was highly feminine; her form symmetrical; her skin fair, smooth, and soft, and her well-developed limbs tapering into unusually small hands and feet. She had a thick *suit* of black hair; and, although she had reached her fortieth year, it had not begun to turn gray, so active was her capillary circulation. — *Boston Med. and Surg. Journal*, Oct. 18, 1854.

The face of this gentleman was strikingly marked by a *suit* of enormous black whiskers that flowed together and united under his chin. — *Margaret*, p. 289

**SULPHUR.** Bitumen. In Kentucky and Tennessee the bituminous rocks abound in sulphur springs, and by a singular confusion the odor of bitumen, where no sulphur is present, is yet called *sulphur*.

**TO SUMMARIZE.** To make a summary of.

The National Intelligencer, in speaking of the publications of the Smithsonian Institution, says:

Additional papers are *summarized* in the Report, all of them making considerable advances upon the heretofore unappropriated domains of science. — Aug 31, 1857.

**TO SUMMONS.** To serve with a summons. Applied to the courts and colleges. "He was *summonsed* to appear before the faculty."

Mary looked at me and winked, and says she, "You're one of the court, you know, Major; but jest go out until the court is *summonsed* before the throne." — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**SUN-BONNET.** A home-made bonnet, with a large "cape," so as to shield both the face and neck, much worn by women and girls in the country.

**SUNDOWN.** Sunset. Peculiar to the United States.

**SUN-FISH.** (*Pomotis vulgaris*.) A beautiful little fresh-water fish, so called from its glittering colors. From the numerous spots on its sides, it is often called Pumpkin Seed; and in some localities it goes by the name of Bream.

**SUN-SQUALL.** A term applied, on the coast of New England, to the Medusae, or Sea-Nettles. It appears to be a corruption of the Germ. *Schirm-qualle* (lit. umbrella jelly-fish). See *Gall*.

About Boston harbor they are called *Sun-fish*, a still further corruption.

**SUN-UP.** Southern for sunrise. When the Southern traveller starts on his journey before the appearance of the sun in the morning, he says he "put out bright and yarly, an hour (or half an hour, as the case may be) before *sun-up*."

One would think that such a horse as that might get over a good deal of ground atwixt *sun-up* and *sundown*. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*, p. 50.

**SUPAWN.** An Indian name in universal use in New England, New York, and other Northern States, for boiled Indian meal. It is also called *hasty pudding*, which see.

The common food of the Indians is pap, or mush, which in the New Netherlands is named *supaen*. This is so common among them, that they seldom pass a day

without it, unless they are on a journey or hunting. We seldom visit an Indian lodge at any time of day, without seeing their *supaen* preparing, or seeing them eating the same. It is the common food of all; and so fond of it are they, that when they visit our people, or each other, they consider themselves neglected unless they are treated with *supaen*. — *Van der Donck's New Netherlands* (1656), *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Collections*.

The flour [of maize] makes a substantial sort of porridge, called by the Americans *supporne*; this is made with water, and eaten with milk. — *Backwoods of Canada*, p. 189.

E'en in thy native regions, how I blush  
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee mush!  
On Hudson's banks while men of Belgic spawn  
Insult and eat thee by the name *suppaw*  
*Barlow, Hasty Pudding.*

For many heroes bold and brave,  
From Newbridge and Tappan,  
And those that drink Passaic's wave,  
And those who eat *suppaw*.  
*Maj. Andre, The Cow Chase, 1780.*

**SUPPLE-JACK.** 1. (*Berchemia volubilis*.) A creeper growing in damp soils in Virginia and further south. "The vine," says Flint, "resembles that of the muscadine grape; but the olive color is deeper. It is well known to attach itself so strongly to the shrub it entwines, as to cause those curious spiral curves and inner flattenings that give its singularity and value to the supple-jack cane." — *Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

2. A child's toy, a jointed manikin worked by a string. Called also a Jumping Jack.

**SURE.** Surely; certainly. "Are you going?" "I'm going *sure*," or "*sure and certain*." South-western.

"There, do you see that horse?" said Jack. "He's a d——d good horse. He's not much to look at; but once get him a going, and he'll go through hell itself, if you put him at it. Get on, Kendall, and I'll mount behind, and show you sights — I will *sure*." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**SURE-ENOUGH.** Real; genuine. Used in the South and West in the same manner as *fair* is in New York. As, "This is a *sure-enough* egg;" meaning that it is a real and not an imitation one. In a description of the absurd ceremonies observed on shipboard in "crossing the line," a writer says:

The subject was seated in the chair, some six feet from the deck, where the barber, standing on a platform before him, thrust a white-wash brush into a bucket of soap-suds, and lathered his face with great liberality; then, drawing from a canvas bag his case of extensive razors (rusty iron hoops), went through all the movements of a *sure-enough* barber. — *U. S. Nautical Mag*, Dec., 1855.

**SURFACE-BOAT.** See *Battery*.

**SURPRISE CANDIDATE.** A fresh candidate suddenly put up and supported by the wire workers of an election, to subserve purposes of their own.

In a judicial district a "*surprise candidate*," scarce known as a lawyer or to the people beyond the local court in which he practised, was run, as since understood, to aid in breaking down one of two able and unobjectionable candidates for the Supreme Bench of the State, who had been nominated in the conventions of the two opposing political parties. — *National Intelligencer*, Sept 20, 1858.

**SURPRISE PARTY.** A party of persons who assemble by agreement, and without invitation, at the house of a mutual friend.

**SURROGATE.** In American law, a county officer who has jurisdiction in granting letters testamentary and letters of administration, and of other matters relating to the settlement of the estates of testators and intestates. — *Kent's Commentaries*, Vol. II. p. 409.

**SURROUND.** A frequent mode of hunting the buffalo by the Indians, consists in making a "*surround*." This is done by inclosing a large herd, and driving them over a precipice upon the rocks, or into one of the profound ravines which intersect the prairies in various directions. In this way thousands are sometimes killed in a single day. — *S. F. Baird*.

**SURVEYOR.** One of the chief officers of the large U. S. Custom-houses. It is the duty of the *surveyor* to superintend and direct the inspectors, weighers, gaugers, and measurers at his port; but he is, in all cases, to be subject to the collector. — *Act of March 2, 1799*.

**TO SUSPICION**, for *to suspect*. South.

If he had a *suspicioned* I was thar, he'd no more swore than he'd dared to kiss my Sal on a washing day; for you see both on us belonged to the same church. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

**SUTOR.** A syrup made from the juice of the fruit of the "pitahaya" (*Cereus giganteus*) by the Indians near the river Gila.

**SUZZ!** A corrupt pronunciation of *sirs!* An exclamation much used in New England, as *sirs* is in Scotland. It is sometimes lengthened into *Law, suzz!* i. e. Lord, sirs!

**SWAD, or SWOD.** In New England, a lump, mass, or bunch; also, a crowd. — *Webster*. It is an old English colloquialism.

There was a *swad* of fine folks, and the house was wellnigh upon chuck full — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 35.

How is a colonist able to pay for this almighty *swad* of everlasting plunder, seein' he has no gold or silver. — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser. ch. 6.

**SWALE.** A local word in New England, signifying an interval or vale; a tract of low land. — *Webster*. This word is provincial in Norfolk, Eng-

land, and means a low place; and shade, in opposition to sunshine. — *Forby's Vocabulary*.

TO SWAMP. To plunge into inextricable difficulties. — *Webster*. This use of the word is not in the English dictionaries. It is common in the United States, though not elegant. Ex. "He invested a large sum of money in land speculations, which *swamped* him;" i. e. ruined him.

I SWAMP IT! A euphemistic form of oath.

Had that darn'd old vessel, that frigate there, bin a stone's throw farder off from land, I should never have swimm'd to shore, dead or alive, to all eternity, I *swamp* it! — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

SWAMP HONEYSUCKLE. (*Azalea nudiflora*.) A plant flowering in April and May, which grows in the swamps from Massachusetts to Virginia. It is also called May-Apple and Pinxter Blumachy.

SWAMP PINK. (*Azalea viscosa*.) A popular name for the Swamp-Honeysuckle.

SWAMPING. Very large; huge. The word *swapping* is used in the same sense in the west of England.

And there we saw a *swamping* gun,  
Large as a log of maple,  
Upon a deuced little cart,  
A load for father's cattle. — *Song, Yankee Doodle*

I SWAN, or SWON! A New England euphemism for "I swear!" *I swan to man!* is a heightened form of the same.

"Well, *I swan!*" exclaimed the mamma, giving a round box on the ear to a dirty little urchin; "what made you let the little huzzy have your specs?" — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 29.

I took a turn round Halifax, and *I swan* if it aint the thunderinest, dreariest place I ever seen, and the people they call Blue-noses. — *Hiram Bigelow's Lett in Family Companion*.

I was dressed tarnation slick. I guess I rubbed two tallow candles or thereabouts into my hair, trying to make it curl, but *I swan to man* there warn't no curl to it, for it stuck out for all sense like porcupine quills. — *Hill's Yankee Stories*.

Well, I've jest come to New York, and its the darndest place, *I swan to man*, that you'd wish to see. — *Story of Uncle Ben, recited by Hackett*.

SWANGA. An African word used among the negroes in some parts of the South in connection with *buckra*, white man; as *swanga buckra*, meaning a dandy white man, or literally, a dandy devil. A friend in South Carolina informs me that the negroes there apply the term to persons who carry themselves conceitedly. Thus of one who is strutting about in a new suit of clothes, they will say, "He kin' o' *swanga* now."



TO SWANT. To wash, as "to *swant* the decks." A seaman's word.

SWAP, or SWOP. An exchange; a barter. Mr. Pickering's remark applies to the noun as well as to the verb.

I'm for a short talk in a horse-*swap*, and always tell a gentlemen what I wish to do. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 28.

TO SWAP, or SWOP. To exchange; to barter. — *Johnson*.

This word has often been noticed by English travellers in this country, and may perhaps be more common here than in England; but it is also used by the vulgar in that country. — *Pickering*.

Clocks, nutmegs, and whatever else,  
You call a Yankee crop,  
If you have cash, he's glad to sell;  
If not, he'll always *swap*!  
For he was born a merchant, sir,  
A Yankee trader bold,  
Who *swapped* his whistle for a knife  
When only four years old. — *Allin, Yankee Ballad*

SWASH, or SWOSH. In the Southern States of America, a name given to a narrow sound or channel of water lying within a sand bank, or between that and the shore. Many such are found on the shores of the Carolinas. — *Webster*.

After noon I crossed the *swash* at the east end of the bay, and in the evening got into good quarters. — *Bartram's Florida*, p. 472.

SWAT, or SWOT. A knock; a blow. Vulgar. A North of England word.

TO SWAT, or SWOT. To strike, smite. A low word.

Tell me that again, and I'll *swot* you over the mug. — *Report of the Hunker Meeting in Albany*, June, 1848.

SWEET HEPPER BUSH. See *Alder*.

SWEET-SOP. (*Annona squamosa*.) An evergreen shrub, which bears a greenish colored fruit. It is also called Custard Apple and Sugar Apple. West Indies.

SWEET-SCENTED SHRUB. See *Allspice*.

SWELL-HEAD. See *Bighead*, No. 2.

SWILL-BOYS. A gang of New York rowdies.

SWILL-MILK. The milk of cows fed on the refuse of distilleries.

TO SWINGE. To singe. Provincial in various parts of England. — *Halliwell*.

The weather has been monstrous hot here, and I do n't think I ever did see things jest sprawled out and *swinged* up so with the sun before. — *May. Jones's Courtship*, p. 185

**SWINGLE-TAIL.** (*Alopius vulpes*.) The popular name for the Thresher Shark, from the use it makes of its long, flexible tail, "with which," says Dr. De Kay, "it literally threshes its enemies." — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**SWITCH.** The movable rails and appendages for turning the cars on a railroad from one track to another. The term is now getting into use in England.

Now Tom, you skunk, this is the third time you forgot to set on that *switch*, and the last time there was twenty people went under, and the balance was bruized; so mind what you're about, and don't forget the *switch* again, or I'm darned if I don't tell the boss (station master). — *Notes on Canada and the U. S.*, Blackwood, Sept., 1855.

**SWITCHEL.** Molasses and water, to which, sometimes, a little vinegar is added. A common beverage in New England.

**SWOT.** See *Swat*.

**TO SWOT.** See *To Swat*.

**I SWOW!** A New England euphemism for *I swear!*

**SYCAMORE.** See *Button-Wood*.

**SYMPATHIZERS.** A name given to those persons who, during the Canadian rebellion in 1836-37, sympathized with the malcontents, and wished to invade the country.

**TO SYSTEMIZE.** To systematize. A word rarely used by good writers. — *Worcester*. Dr. Webster, however, gives it the preference over *systematize*, which he denounces as "ill formed." What would he have thought of *dogmize* and *stigmatize*, by way of "improving" the language?

## T.

**TO TABLE.** To lay on the table. "The bill for distributing the public lands among the States was *tabled* by a large majority."

**TACANAHAC.** Another name for the Balsam Poplar, which see.

**TO TACKLE.** 1. To harness; as, to *tackle* a horse into a gig, sleigh, coach,

or wagon. — *Webster*. Local in England and colloquial in the United States.

2. To seize, to lay hold of; as, a wrestler *tackles* his antagonist, a dog *tackles* the game. — *Webster*. Colloquial in England and the United States.

Well, I tell you what, it tuck a feller mighty wide between the eyes to *tackle* that tree, for it was a whopper. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 53.

I shook the two fellows off my trunks monstous quick, and was going to *tackle* the chaps what had my carpet bag. — *Maj. Jones's Travels*.

The people are no ways backward about discussing the subject of Mormonism, over-confident in their ability to demolish every Gentile against polygamy. One of the gentry *tackled* Gov. Powell the other day, determined to make a convert. — *N. Y. Times*, Aug. 9, 1858.

**TAFFY.** A common coarse sweet-meat, made with treacle thickened by boiling. Almonds are often stuck into it. Various dialects. — *Halliwell*.

Both the word and the thing are well known among us.

**TAG.** A slight touch. A boy, touched by one who is in the first instance fixed upon to commence the game, is in his turn obliged to overtake and touch another of the party, when he cries, *Tag!* and so the game proceeds. According to Mr. Halliwell, the same game is played in Warwickshire, where it is called *tick*.

**TAILOR.** A fish resembling the shad, but inferior to it in size and flavor. In the towns on the Potomac, the Blue fish is called a *Salt-water tailor*.

**'TAINT.** A corrupt abbreviation for *it is not*.

"Wonder what time it is?" said Miss Mary. "Oh, *taint* late," says he. "Is there going to be any preaching here to-morrow?" — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 69.

**TO TAKE TO DO.** To take to task; to reprove. Colloquial in England and in New England.

The Life Boat, a weekly sheet in this city, *takes* the Bee to do, for its course in relation to the Liquor Law. — *Boston Bee*, July 29, 1852.

**TO TAKE THE BACK TRACK.** To recede from one's position.

The first law of self-preservation has admonished Mr. Douglass that he has gone as far in his slavery concessions to the South as he can possibly go, and that, if he would save himself at home, he must *take the back track*. — *N. Y. Herald*, Dec. 26, 1857.

**TO TAKE THE RAG OFF.** To surrass.

How often I have laughed over the fun of the forecastle. I would back it for wit against any bar-room in New York or New Orleans, and I believe they *take the rag off* all creation. — *S. Shick; Nature and Human Nature*, p. 28.

**TO TAKE THE SHINE OFF.** See *Shine*, No 1.

**TO TAKE A SHUTE.** In the West, a person running away, or leaving in a hurry, is said to have "*taken a shute*."

**TO TAKE ON.** To grieve; to mourn, lament. Colloquial in England and the United States.

"Why, Polly, what's the matter, gal," inquired he; "what in thunder makes you *take on* so? Come, out with the cause, or I shall get a blubberin' too." — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**TO TAKE UP.** 1. *To take up* animals is a common phrase in the language of the prairies, and means to bring them in and prepare them for a journey or the day's march, either by saddling them, or harnessing them to a wagon.

2. To put up, as a traveller at an inn. Southern.

**TO TAKE WATER.** To run away, make off. A Western expression, doubtless borrowed from sportsmen.

He quitted the wheel [of the steam-boat] and made for his state-room, where he stayed till the boat reached Natchez, when he *took water*, and they do say moved to the North. — *Maj. Dunkum, N. Y. Sp. Times*.

**TALENTED.** Furnished with talents; possessing skill or talents. — *Webster*. This, says Todd, is "an old word, long disused, but lately revived." It is as correctly formed as *moneyed* or *landed*, which are regarded as unexceptionable; yet it is pretty generally condemned, and on each side of the water the responsibility of coining it is cast upon the other, as will be seen from what follows:

The London Monthly Magazine (Sept. 1831) blames Mr. Stanley for using this word. "Sir Robert Peel referred it to his American associations, and prayed him never to employ it again, with all the strenuousness of Oxonian adjuration." The Philadelphia National Gazette, in speaking of the above, adds: "Sir Robert was right in protesting against the word, but wrong in his reference. It is of London cockney derivation, and still more employed in Great Britain than in America."

Coleridge says, "I regret to see that vile and barbarous vocable, *talented*, stealing out of the newspapers into the leading reviews and most respectable publications of the day. Why not *shillinged*, *farthinged*, *tenpenced*, etc. The formation of a participle passive from a noun is a license that nothing but a very peculiar facility can excuse. Most of these pieces of slang come from America." — *Table Talk*, July 8, 1832.

Mr. Bulwer is not yet "*talented*," a pseudo-participle, which no one will use who is not ripe for any atrocity; but he "*progresses*" at a fearful rate. — *Edinburgh Rev.*, Vol. LXV. p. 240.

**TALK.** Among the Indians of North America, a public conference, as re-

specting peace or war, negotiation, and the like ; or an official verbal communication made from them to another nation or its agents, or made to them by the same. — *Webster*.

But snakes are in the bosoms of their race ;  
And though they held with us a friendly *tall*,  
The hollow peace-tree fell beneath their tomahawk.

*Campbell, Gertrude of Wyoming*

**TO TALK TURKEY.** To talk in a silly manner, talk nonsense. In allusion, probably, to the silly airs of a turkey-cock.

Polly Bean was not the first girl I run against, by a long shot ; and I was plaguy apt to *talk turkey* always when I got sociable, if it was only out of politeness. — *McClintock, Beedle's Marriage*.

**TALKING-IRON.** A comical name for a gun or rifle ; called also a *shooting-iron*, — on the same principle that in flash language a pistol is “a barker,” and a watch “a ticker,” and sometimes “a tattler.”

I hops out of bed, feels for my trunk, and outs with my *talkin'-iron*, that was all ready loaded. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**TALL.** 1. Great ; fine ; splendid ; extravagant. A flash word.

Stump straightened up and started at a pace that would have staggered Captain Barclay, Ellsworth, or the greatest pedestrian mentioned in the annals of “*tall walking*.” — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 398.

If we don't come out in force and do things open and above board, we'll have a *ta'l* fight with the gang. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 129.

The ginerall found the next day a sight o' gold pieces and a whole pot full o' the *tallest* kind o' jewels. — *The Yankee Among the Mermaids*.

Ohio warn't any great shakes twenty years ago ; but let me tell you, stranger, it had a mighty big pile of the *tallest* kind of land layin' around waitin' to be opened up to the sunlight. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 211.

The live Sucker from Illinois had the daring to say that our Arkansaw friend's storics smelt rather *tall*. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

2. Finely ; exceedingly ; highly ; very much. Western.

I will walk *tall* into varmint and Indian ; it's a way I've got, and it comes as natural as grinning to a hyena. I'm a regular tornado, tough as hickory, and long-winded as a nor'-wester. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 131.

I seed Jess warn't pleased ; but I did n't estimate him very *tall*, so I kept on dancin' with Sally, and ended by kissin' her good by, and making him jealous as a pet pinter. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**TAMAL, or TAMAULI.** A peculiar Spanish-American dish made up of a paste of crushed or ground maize, sometimes with minced meat added, when it is wrapped in the husks of maize and baked on the coals.

The mountebanks draw a crowd, and this attracts a few sellers of whiskey, tortillas, and *tamaules*, making a ruddy picturesque group. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

**TAMARACK.** See *Hackmatack*.

**TANGLE-FOOT.** One of the Western figurative terms for whiskey.

**TANGLE-LEGS.** See *Hobble-Bush*.

**TAPIOCA.** A substance much used in the United States for puddings and other culinary purposes. It is extracted from the *manioc* (*Jatropha manihot*), a shrub indigenous to tropical America, and now cultivated from Florida to Magellan. It is said that an acre of manioc will nourish more persons than six acres of wheat. Its roots attain the size of the thigh. Every part of the plant is filled with a milky juice, which is a very violent and dangerous poison, producing death in a few minutes, when swallowed; yet human ingenuity has converted its roots into an article of food. This is done by grinding them in wooden mills, after which the paste is put into sacks, and exposed to the action of a powerful press. The poisonous juice is thereby extracted, and the residue is the substance known as *cassava* or *mandioca*, a nutritious flour, preferred by the natives to that from wheat. When kept from moisture, this flour will keep good for fifteen or twenty years. The *tapioca* is made by separating from the fibrous part of the roots a small quantity of the pulp, after the juice is extracted, and working it by hand till a thick white cream appears on the surface. This, being scraped off and washed in water, gradually subsides to the bottom. After the water is poured off, the remaining moisture is dissipated by a slow fire, and, the substance being constantly stirred, gradually forms into grains about as large as those of sago. This is the purest and most wholesome part of the manioc. — *Encyc. Americana*.

**TO TAP.** To add a new sole or heel to a shoe. Herefordshire, England.  
— *Worcester*.

**TO BE ON ONE'S TAPS,** is to be on one's feet, literally on one's soles; a metaphor borrowed from the shoemaker.

Your editor, when times are dull, must be "*on his taps*," as the saying is. When the mail comes through and brings news enough to make things look lively, why then he must work, and cut, and paste, as though the world depended on him. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**TARNAL.** A New England corruption of *eternal*.

Whate'er he tries, it is his rule,  
If once he fail to reach the "gool,"  
To rate himself a "tarnal fool,

By golly!" — *Yankee Philosophy*.

**TARNATION.** A common oath both in Old and New England. It is a variation of *Darnation*.

Poor honest John! 'tis plain he know'd  
But liddle of live's range,  
Or he 'd a know'd, gals oft, at fust,  
Have ways *tarnation* strange. — *Essex Dialect*, p. 11.

TARVE. A turn, bend, curve.

I can't say much for your axe, stranger, for this helve has no *tarve* to it; but, such as it is, down must come this elm — *Cooper, Oak Openings*

TAUNTON TURKEYS. The common herring, of which large quantities are taken near Taunton, Massachusetts. Comp. *Albany Beef*.

Our fisheries o'er the world are famed,  
The mackerel, shad, and cod !  
And *Taunton turkeys* are so thick,  
We sell them by the rod !

*Allin, Yankee Ballad.*

TAUTAUG, or TAUTOG. (*Tautoga americana*.) The name of the Black-fish caught in the waters of Rhode Island. It is an Abenaki Indian word, and may be found in Roger Williams's Key to the Indian Language, where, however, he calls it the Sheepshead, which is an entirely different fish. In New York it is called Black Fish, from the color of its back and sides.

For blue fish merely, nothing can be as good as Edgartown. For blue fish, bass, and *tautog* altogether, Seconnet is better. — *Dan'l Webster, Private Cor.*, Vol. I. p. 339.

TAVERN. A house licensed to sell liquors in small quantities to be drank on the spot. In some of the United States *tavern* is synonymous with "inn" or "hotel," and denotes a house for the entertainment of travellers, as well as for the sale of liquors, licensed for that purpose. — *Webster*.

TAVERN-KEEPER. One who is licensed to sell liquors to be drank in his own house, and to entertain travellers and lodgers, together with the horses and oxen composing their teams. — *Webster*.

TO TAX. To charge; as, "What will you *tax* me a yard for this cloth?" i. e. what will you charge for it, or, what is the price of it? New England.

Job Clark was a wonderful pious pedlar, and would n't take advantage of a minister of the Gospel. He, therefore, in tradin' with the clergy, only *taxed* his goods at half price. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 218.

TEAM. He's a *whole team*, or a *full team*, are slang expressions of admiration, meaning he is a person of great abilities and energy.

TEAR-COAT, or TEAR-BLANKET (often pron. *Tar-coat* in the West). The *Arabia Spinosa*, or Angelia tree, so called because its prickles tear the coats of hunters, or the blankets of the Indians, in passing.

TEA-SQUALL. A not over respectful name for a tea-party.

TEETER. See *Peetweet*.

**TO TEETER.** 1. To see-saw on a balanced plank, as children for amusement. — *Worcester*. The English write and pronounce *titter*.

2. To bob the body up and down, as in saluting a person or taking a seat.

With a few fashionable phrases in your noddles, a face barbarously brutalized — a ridiculously genteel apparel, and a most audacious assurance — you tip and *teeter* about, thinking that you excite the admiration of all, but of the ladies in particular. *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I p 184.

**TEETER-TAWTER.** The game of see-saw. In England pronounced *titter-totter*. Children, while playing it, repeat the distich :

*Teeter-tawter,*  
Milk and water.

**TEETH-ACHE.** An attempted improvement in the way of accuracy on the word *tooth-ache*.

**TEETOTALLY.** Entirely; totally.

The meetin' houses on one side of the water, how *teetotally* different they be! — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 12.

Stranger, I'm powerful sorry, but we're *teetotally* out; he took every bit of food with him. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 245.

Things weren't going on right; so I pretty nearly gave myself up *teetotally* to the good of the republic — *J C Neal, Peter Bush*.

I would n't have you think that I am *teetotally* opposed to dancing in every shape; for the reason that I used to heel and toe it a trifle myself, when young. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

**TEETOTACIOUSLY.** A strange Western term meaning a little more than *teetotally*, if such a thing be possible.

He was, by ——! I won't swear, 'cause it's wicked; but if he was n't, I hope to be *teetotaciously* chawed up! — *Western Adventures, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**TELEGRAM.** A despatch by the Electro-Telegraph.

We claim this as an American word, it having been first suggested and its adoption urged as early as the year 1852. To the Albany Evening Journal is entitled the credit of the first suggestion of the term, that paper having, on the 6th April, 1852, published the following, which emanated from Mr. E. Peshine Smith, of Rochester.

*A New Word.* — A friend desires us to give notice that he will ask leave, at some convenient time, to introduce a new word into the vocabulary. The object of this proposed innovation, is to avoid the necessity, now existing, of using two words, for which there is very frequent occasion, when one will answer. It is **TELEGRAM**, instead of Telegraphic Despatch, or Telegraphic Communication. The word is formed according to the strictest laws of the language from which its root comes. Telegraph means to write from a distance; *Telegram*, the writing itself, executed from a distance. Monogram, Logogram, etc., are words formed upon the same analogy and



in good acceptance. Our friend, moreover, says that the House Line, if disposed to be precise, should call their communications Teletypes, as they are printed, not written. In a generous spirit of toleration, he proposes no action upon the last suggestion; but as to everybody else, except the employers and customers of the House Line, he would have them "held and firmly bound" to speak, write, print, and telegraph, TELEGRAM, instead of any two words signifying the same thing, under penalty of being considered verbose and tedious.

Immediately after this, probably from the suggestion in the Albany Journal, there appeared in the "Daily American Telegraph," published in Washington, on the 27th of April, 1852 (a copy of which we have seen), the following from the Editor, Mr. Thomas Connolly.

*Telegram* — Telegraph, means to write from a distance: *Telegram*, the writing itself executed from a distance Monogram, Logogram, etc., are words formed upon the same analogy, and in good acceptance. Hence, *Telegram* is the appropriate heading of a Telegraphic despatch. Well, we'll go it. Look to our heading.

The Telegraph despatches in the same paper were accordingly given under the heading of TELEGRAMS, and the heading continued for some time; but the suggestion not being followed by the press, it was dropped.

In discussing the origin of the term in England, the London "Notes and Queries" of Nov. 21, 1857, asserts that it was used both in Liverpool and London four years before. But even admitting the correctness of this assertion — for it is only an assertion — the date, it will be perceived, falls a year and a half short of the earlier American use of it.

TELL. A saying; generally, however, a good one, or a complimentary one. A young lady will say to another, "I've a *tell* for you," i. e. I've a compliment for you, or I have heard some one speak highly of you. Not elegant.

In his dealings with the other sex he is a little twistical, according to their *tell*. — *Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

TO TELL. To *tell* one good-bye, is the Southern phrase for to bid one good-bye. "Before I leave town, I will come and *tell* you good-bye."

TO TELL ON. To tell of; to tell about. Vulgar.

"Well," says the General, "I am glad I did n't understand him, for now it stumps me considerable. Major, who was that?" "Why," says I, "General, he is the son of a man I've heard you *tell* on a thousand times." — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, 29.

TO TEND, for to attend.

Most of the passengers in the cars were preachers what had been up to Augusta to *tend* the convention. — *Maj. Jones's Travels*.

TENDSOME. Requiring much attendance; as, "a *tendsome* child." — *Webster*. This word is used in Connecticut.

**TENEMENT HOUSE.** In the city of New York a house let to, or occupied by, a number of tenants.

**TEN-PINS.** Laws having been passed against the establishment of "nine-pin alleys," the name and the number of pins were at once changed.

**TERAWCHY.** This word is evidently of Dutch origin, and would seem to be *te ratje*, the little rat, an equivalent for the term "creep-mouse," which is used in a like manner. It is a very common word in the nursery, and is always accompanied by a peculiar motion of the fingers, with the palm of the hand presented to the child. It is as well known among the old English families of New York as among those of Dutch descent.

**TERRAPIN.** (*Palustris*.) A name given to a species of tide-water tortoise, common in the Atlantic States south of New York, and considered an article of luxury. It is found exclusively in the salt water, and always in the neighborhood of marshes.

**TERRITORY.** A large district of country belonging to the United States, though not forming a part of any individual State, and under a temporary government. — *Worcester*.

**TESQUITE.** An alkaline efflorescence of considerable value which exudes from the earth around many of the lakes, ponds, and marshy grounds in New Mexico, California, and Arizona.

**TEST-PAPER.** A paper or instrument shown to a jury as evidence. A term used in the Pennsylvania Courts. Called also a "standard paper." — *Burrill's Law Dic.*

**TEXAN HARE.** See *Jackass Rabbit*.

**THANKSGIVING DAY.** A day set apart once a year (usually in the month of November), by the Governors of States, for a general thanksgiving to God for blessings enjoyed. The custom originated among the Puritans of New England, where, as a season of social festivities and family reunions, it has almost wholly usurped the place of Christmas.

**THE.** American speakers and writers very commonly use the definite article in the French manner, and contrary to the genius of the English language, before the names of diseases.

There would be nothing questionable in the report that De Soto died of typhus fever, or some similar malady, if another account did not ascribe his death to the dysentery. — *Willmer's Life of De Soto*, p. 505.

**THERE,** (pron. *thar*.) On the spot; on hand; at home. Western. The author of "A Stray Yankee in Texas," in speaking of this use of the word,

says, "A man who accepts an invitation to a frolic or a fight, a wedding or a funeral, probably answers, I'm *thar*. A person wishing to imply that he is perfectly at home in any thing, says he is *thar*; a good hunter or fisher is also *thar*."

**THIMBLE-BERRY.** (*Rubus occidentalis*.) The Black Raspberry, so called by many from the naked receptacle, which has the shape of a thimble.

**THIMBLE-WEED.** (*Rudbeckia*.) A tall plant six or eight feet high, resembling the sunflower. It is one of the herbs prepared by the Shakers, and is used in medicine for its diuretic and tonic properties. Like the Thimble-berry, its receptacle resembles a thimble.

**THIS HERE, and THAT THERE.** These vulgar pleonasms are often heard in this country as well as in England.

*This yere*, is the common pronunciation in the South.

**THOMPSONIAN DOCTOR.** A physician who follows the Thompsonian practice; also called Steam Doctor.

**THOMPSONIAN PRACTICE.** A peculiar treatment of diseases, so named from its inventor. The medicines are labelled from No. 1 to No. 10, and are compounds of Cayenne pepper, lobelia, etc.

**THORNY LOCUST.** See *Honey Locust*.

**THOROUGHFARE.** A low gap between mountains; as, "*Thoroughfare gap*" in Fauquier county, Virginia. "*Thoroughfare mountain*." Southern.

**THOROUGHWORT.** Another name for *Boneset*, which see.

**THOUSAND OF BRICK.** *Like a thousand of brick*, is a queer simile very often heard. It means, of course, very heavily, like brick dumped out of a cart; and then vigorously, vehemently.

A huge negro woman threw herself convulsively from her feet, and fell *like a thousand of brick* across a diminutive old man — *Simon Suggs*

The new "Yankee Doodle," by George P. Morris, created an immense noise. Nobody could sit still; hands and feet came into the chorus of their own accord, and the house was down "*like a thousand of brick*" — *New York Paper*.

I see he was gettin riled some, and I thought he'd bile over. You see that's the way with us Western folks. If folks is sassy, we walk right into 'em *like a thousand of brick*. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 109.

Sweet is the melting fall of music, but not such music as nightly comes down upon us *like a thousand of bricks* from the balconies of museums, nor such as we sometimes hear at the opera. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 201.

**THROUGH,** is used in the West for *swathe*, or the cut of the cradle through grass or grain. Like "*swathe*," it is also used figuratively; as, "*What a through he cut!*" i. e. what a swell!

**THROUGH THE MILL.** A person is said to have been *through the mill* when he has had experience in a particular thing.

**TO THROW IN.** To contribute; as, "I'll *throw in* for a pony race."

**THUNDERING.** Very; exceedingly. A vulgar colloquialism, used both in England and in this country.

Lord Hervey, in his *Memoirs of the Court of George II.*, mentions Queen Caroline's indignation at the infliction of a "*thundering* long sermon."

I was told that Faneuil Hall was called the "cradle of liberty." I reckon old King George thought they were *thundering* fine children that were rocked in it, and a good many of them. — *Crockett, Tour Down East*, p. 61.

If a chap only comes from the North, and has got a crop of hair and whiskers, and a coat different from everybody else, and a *thunderin'* great big gold chain about his neck, he's the poplerest man among the ladies — *Maj Jones's Courtship*, p. 82.

**TICK NATION.** A name given to regions in which ticks abound, and, as the grasses and sandy soil infected by them are peculiar to the poorer parts of the country, it is sometimes used as a term of reproach.

**TICKET.** Politically it means a printed list of candidates to be used at an election. According to circumstances a man is said to vote the *straight ticket*, i. e. the ticket containing the "regular nomination" of his party without change; a *scratch ticket*, a ticket from which the names of one or more of the candidates are erased; a *split ticket*, a ticket representing different divisions of his party; or a *mixed ticket*, a ticket in which the nominations of different parties are blended into one.

**TICKET-SWINDLER.** Several complaints have been made at the Mayor's office, of a new system of swindling persons from the interior, who are returning to Germany, and other persons of Europe. It is the custom with the runners of packet-lines to have their agents in the country inclose the ticket in an envelope, which the passenger is directed to deliver to the owners of the lines at their office in New York. In many cases the *ticket swindlers* meet the passengers at the railroad depots, and, learning their business, take them to their offices, stating that it is the regular office of the steamship or packet line, and after inspecting the tickets pronounce them "all right," but that it will be necessary to deposit \$10 for "medical fees" on the passage. The passenger demurs, perhaps; but at last, just before the steamer or ship leaves, pays the amount, after being told he cannot proceed on his journey without paying the fees. This system has been practised quite extensively within a few weeks back. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 13, 1858.

**TICKLER.** 1. A common name among merchants and bankers for a book in which a register of notes or debts is kept for reference.

2. A small pocket flask in which to carry liquor.

Then he took out a *tickler* of whiskey; and arter he 'd took three or four swallows out'n it, says he, "Oblge me by taking a horn" — *Southern Sketches*, p. 33.

**TIE.** 1. The state produced by an equal number of votes on two opposite sides. — *Worcester*. I have not found this very common use of the word in any other dictionary or glossary, English or American.

2. A pair that are alike; a match. "Them two hogs is a *tie*." *Western*.

**TO TIE TO.** In Western phraseology, a man who "will do to *tie to*," is one who can be relied upon, an honest man.

**TO TIE UP.** To make fast, as a vessel or steamboat. An expression peculiar to the West.

"It's foggy to-night," said the captain, "and you 'd best run the boat till nine, and then *tie up*."

"*Tie her up!*" says Jim. "I *tie her up* in a horn! Do you reckon I can't run her in such a fog as this? No, sir! I'll keep her a bilin' till my watch is up, and then I'll *tie up*, as you're afeard to run. — *May. Bunlum N. Y. Sp. Times*."

**TIGER.** In 1822, the Boston Light Infantry, under Captain Mackintosh and Lieut. Robert C. Winthrop, visited Salem and encamped in Washington square; and during their stay a few of the members indulged in sports incidental to camp duty, when some visitor exclaimed to one who was a little rough, "Oh, you Tiger!" It became a catch word, and as a term of playful reproach, "You're a Tiger," was adopted as one of the peculiar phrases of the corps. On the route to Boston some musical genius sung an impromptu line, "Oh, you Tigers, don't you know," to the air of "Rob Roy McGregor oh!" Of course the appellation soon induced the Tigers by name to imitate the actions of the Tiger, and the "growl" was introduced, and at the conclusion of three cheers "a tiger" was invariably called for.

In 1826, the Infantry visited New York, being the first volunteer corps to make a trip from this city to another State; and while there the Tigers at a public festival awoke the echoes and astonished the Gothamites by giving the genuine howl. It pleased the fancy of the hosts, and gradually it became adopted on all festive and joyous occasions, and now "three cheers and a *tiger*" are the inseparable demonstrations of approbation in that city. — *Boston Evening Gazette*.

**TIGER-CAT.** See *Ocelot*.

**TIGHT.** 1. Close; parsimonious; saving; as, "a man *tight* in his dealings."

Close ; hard ; as, "a *tight* bargain." — *Webster*. To these American uses of the word is to be added another similar to the last. When money is difficult to be procured by discounting, etc., business men say, "the money market is *tight*," or "money is *tight*." In this sense it is the opposite of *easy*, which see.

The Deacon was as *tight* as the skin on his back ; begrudged folks their victuals when they came to his house. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 30.

The money market, except on the best stocks, is getting *tight*, and there is a general calling in of loans upon the "fancies" — *N. Y. Tribune*.

2. *Tipsy* ; drunk. Used mostly at the South. The question has been asked, "Can a man be considered a loose character who comes home *tight* every night?"

**TIGHT MATCH.** A close or even match, as of two persons wrestling or running together.

**TIGHT PLACE.** To be *in a tight place* is to be in straits, to be short of money.

**TIGHT SCROUGING**, i. e. hard squeezing. Said of any thing difficult to accomplish. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**TIGHT SQUEEZE.** A difficulty.

It's a *tight squeeze* sometimes to scrouge between a lie and the truth in business. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 217.

**TILT.** See *Lawyer*, No. 1.

**TILT-UP, or TIP-UP.** The popular name of the Sand-Piper. See *Peet-Weet*.

**TIMBER.** Throughout the West and South this term is applied to woodland. A man going into the woods will tell you he is going into the *timber*.

After proceeding half a mile into the *tumber*, we were suddenly brought to a stand by the dense undergrowth. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

**TIME.** "What *time* are you?" means, What o'clock is it?

**TIMOTHY.** (*Phleum pratense*.) The common name for the Herd's Grass ; said to be derived from Timothy Hanson, one of its early propagators. — *Bigelow's Flora Bostoniensis*.

**TINAJA.** (Span. pron. *tináha*.) The word signifies, primarily, an unglazed earthen water-jar ; and is applied on the Mexican frontier to water-holes or cavities in rocks on the sides of mountains, where water accumulates. These are filled during the rainy season, and are the chief or only dependence of travellers for water at other times.

Permanent water is found under a cleft of igneous rocks, and does not properly deserve the name of a spring, but is rather a *tinaja* supplied by water trickling through the rocks from water-holes above. — *Schott's Obs. on the Country along the Mexican Boundary*, p. 69.

Eight of these *tinajas*, one above the other, the highest too difficult to reach [and found here]; as the water is used from the lower ones, you ascend to the next higher, passing it down by means of buckets. — *Lieut. Michler's Report, Mexican Boundary*, p. 114.

**TINKER.** A small mackerel. New England.

**TIP-UP.** See *Peet-weet*.

**TIPSINAH.** The wild prairie turnip, used as food by the North-western Indians.

**TITHING-MAN.** In New England a parish officer appointed to preserve order at public worship, and enforce the proper observance of the Sabbath. — *Worcester*.

**TO TITIVATE.** To dress up. "To *titivate* oneself," is to make one's toilet. Colloquial in England and the United States.

Well, I'll arrive in time for dinner; I'll *titivate* myself up, and down to drawin'-room. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 23.

The girls are all so *titivated* off with false beauty, that a fellow loses his heart before he knows it. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 151.

**TITTER.** An eruption on the skin. This is merely another pronunciation of *tetter*. It is used in New England, and, according to Forby, is provincial in England.

**TO.** 1. For *at* or *in*. An exceedingly common vulgarism in the Northern States. We often hear such barbarous expressions as, "He lives *to* York;" "He wan't *to* hum" (i. e. at home); while the opposite mistake of *in* for *into* is hardly less frequent.

I have forgot what little I learnt *to* night-school; and, in fact, I never was any great shakes at it. — *Sam Slick*.

When is charity like a top? When it begins *to* hum. — *Balt. Sun*.

The boiler, instead of going upward, moved in a horizontal line, passed through the main building directly through the weaver's room, without injuring the workmen there, although men were *to* work on each side of where the boiler passed. — *Rome Sentinel*, Sept. 1858.

2. *To*, as the sign of the infinitive, is sometimes improperly omitted.

We found the medical student at his lodgings, sitting at a table in the middle of a very disorderly apartment, making believe [*to*] eat a late breakfast. — *Putnam's Magazine*, May, 1854.

**TOAD-FISH.** (*Batrachus variegatus*.) This repulsive creature, and fisherman's pest, is called also "Oyster Fish," on the New Jersey coast,

from its frequenting the oyster beds, and "Grubley" on the coast of New England.

**TOBACCO.** (W. Ind. *tabago* or *tabacco*, a cigar or pipe.) An American plant, the dried leaves of which are used for smoking, chewing, and for making snuff. The more common varieties cultivated in the United States are Hudson, Frederick, Thickjoint, Shoestring, Thickset, Sweet-scented, Orinoko, etc. Among the host of names given to it according to the various modes in which it is prepared for *chewing* are, Pig-tail, Ladies' Twist, Cavendish, Honey-dew, Negro-head (pron. Nigger-head), Long Cut, Short Cut, Bull's Eye, Plug, Fig, Oronoko Leaf, Nail-rod or 32's, Roll, Fine Spun, Pound, etc. etc. There is, besides, *smoking* tobacco, put up in papers of various kinds, as Kanaster, Kite-foot, Cut-stems, etc. In the form of *snuff* there are also many terms for it, as Maccoboy, Rappce (American and foreign, named after the places it is manufactured in), American gentleman, Demigros, Pure Virginia, Copenhagen, Nachitoches, Bourbon, St. Domingo, Scotch, High Toast, Irish Blackguard, Irish High Toast, etc. etc.

**TOBACCO-BOX.** A small fresh-water fish, called also Sunfish and Pumpkin Seed.

**TOBACCO-ROOT.** See *Kooyah Root*.

**TO TOE THE MARK.** A phrase borrowed from the prize-ring, and meaning, to come up to one's obligations.

**TO TOLE.** To draw or cause to follow, by presenting something pleasing or desirable to view; to allure by some bait. — *Webster*.

We apply this old English word only to the alluring of animals. Thus in New England the farmers *tole* sheep, and cause them to follow, by holding to them a measure of corn or some fodder. In the Middle States wild ducks are *toled* within gun-shot, by causing a little dog to run up and down behind a brushwood fence, which excites their curiosity.

**TOMAHAWK.** (Algonkin Ind., *tomehagen*.) An Indian hatchet, or axe.

It was and is the custom of the Indians to go through the ceremony of burying the *tomahawk*, when they made peace; when they went to war, they dug it up again. Hence the phrases "to bury the *tomahawk*," and "to dig up the *tomahawk*," are sometimes used by political speakers and writers with reference to the healing up of past disputes or the breaking out of new ones. See *Hatchet*.

Fierce the fight and short,  
As is the whirlwind. Soon the conquerors  
And conquered vanished, and the dead remain  
Mangled by *tomahawks*. — *Bryant, The Fountain*.



**TOMCOD.** (*Morrhua pruinosa*.) A small fish common to our coast, but which becomes very abundant after the first frost; hence the name of Frost Fish, by which it is also known. — *Storer, Fishes of Massachusetts*.

Dr. J. V. C. Smith believes the *tomcod* to be the same as a fish known in Europe as the *tacaud* of Cuvier, and that *tomcod* is a corruption of the Indian name, *tacaud*, i. e. plenty-fish, as this little fish was well known to our aborigines.

The Hull merchant came under the frigate's stern, and volunteered to go and catch some *tomcod*. — *Lieut. Wise, Scampavias*, p. 19.

The face of the mermaid was regular human, and it looked rather tawney and flabby like a biled nigger, with fleshy eyes, and a mouth like a huge *tomcod*. — *Story of the Mermaid*

**TOM-DOG.** Male dogs, as well as cats, take the prefix "tom," in some parts of the West. "Them *tom-dogs* howls awful to-night."

**TOMBS.** A name commonly given to the New York city prison, in allusion to its heavy Egyptian style of architecture.

**TOMBS LAWYER.** A lawyer whose clients are the inmates of the New York city prison. A contemptuous term. See *Shyster*.

**TONGS.** A name for pantaloons and roundabouts, formerly in use in New England.

Children were playing on the green, the boys dressed in *tongs*; some in skirt-coats, etc. — *Margaret*, p. 34

**TOOTHACHE BUSH.** (*Xanthoxylum fraxineum*.) Prickly Ash; so called from its pungent properties, made sensible when applied to an aching tooth.

**TOOTHACHE GRASS.** (*Monocera aromatica*.) A singular kind of grass which grows in Florida, with a naked stalk four feet high. It affects the breath and milk of cows, which eat it when young and tender. The root affects the salivary glands. — *Williams's Florida*.

**TOOTING-TUB.** A puritanical term for a church-organ.

I've heard they're subscribing around for an organ! Yes, an organ! What on earth will they do next? That ever I should live to see a Popish *tootin'-tub* stuck up in our gallery! — *Brook, Eastford*, p. 22.

**TOP NOTCH.** The highest point.

To-day the editor of the Union is cheered to the very *top notch* of joyous exultation by a speech from some Democratic orator or a paragraph from some Democratic editor; to-morrow he is horrified by the atrocious sentiment of some rantipole Barnburner. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Oct. 16, 1848.

**TORE.** The place where one stands to shoot marbles from. Used by the boys of New York.

**TORTILLA.** (Spanish.) The well-known large, round, thin cake prepared from a paste made of the soaked grains of maize, having the hulls rubbed off before grinding the mass, and then baked on an earthen griddle.

The corn for the *tortillas* is boiled, with a little lime in the water, until the outer husk or shell is peeled off, when it is ground upon an oblong stone called a "metate," a domestic utensil handed down from the aboriginal inhabitants. The meal is then properly mixed and seasoned, and cooked upon small sheets of iron and copper. They are baked very thin, and always served up hot — *Davis, El Gringo*, p. 341.

Hearing a continual slap, slap, slap, I looked round and saw a woman kneeling upon the ground, rubbing the metate, while a pretty girl was slapping a *tortilla* between her hands. — *Olmsted's Texas*

A triangular piece of *tortilla* is converted into a spoon, and soup is even eaten in this way. Spoons are seldom met with even in the houses of the rich, the use of the *tortilla* being universal. — *Ruxton's Adv. in Mexico*, p. 145.

**TORY.** During the war of the Revolution this term was applied to the royalists. Some years ago, when the term "Whig" was adopted by one of our political parties, that of *Tory* was given to the Democratic party. It is not now applied to any party.

It was said that the *tories* were arming and collecting in the Highlands, under the direction of distinguished officers, to aid the conspiracies formed by Gov. Tryon and his adherents. — *Living, Life of Washington*, Vol. II p. 371.

**TOTE.** The whole; all. "The whole *tote*," a common pleonasm. Provincial in England and in New England.

**TO TOTE.** To carry. A queer word, much used in the Southern States. It has been, absurdly enough, derived from the Latin *tolli*, but is more probably of African origin.

The militia had everlastin' great long swords as much as they could *tote*. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*, p. 39.

Here a boy was ferociously cutting wood — there one *toting* wood — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 167.

The watchman arrested Mr. Wimple for disturbing the peace, and *toted* him off to the calaboose. — *Pickings from the N. O. Picayune*, p. 120.

My gun here *totes* fifteen buckshot and a ball, and slings 'em to kill. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 169

"Goodness gracious!" said old Miss Stallins; "white servants! Well, the Lord knows I would n't have none on 'em about me. I could never bear to see a white gall *toatin'* my child about, and waitin' on me like a nigger; it would hurt my conscience." — *Maj. Jones's Travels*.

And its oh! she was so neat a maid,  
That her stockings and her shoes

She *toted* in her lily-white hands,  
 For to keep them from the dews  
*Ohio Boatman's Song.*

**TOTE-LOAD.** As much as one can carry. Southern.

**TOTEM.** (Algonkin Ind.) The family mark or coat of arms of the North American Indians.

Speaking of the Iroquois, Mr. Schoolcraft says: "Nothing is more fully under the cognizance of observers of the manners and customs of this people, than the fact of the entire mass of a canton or tribe being separated into distinct clans, each of them distinguished by the name and device of some quadruped, bird, or other object of the animal kingdom. This device is called among the Algonquins (where the same separation into families or clans exists), *totem*, and we shall employ the same term here, as being already well known to writers." — *Notes on the Iroquois*, p. 176.

Think not that my blood shall mingle with the humble mark of the Awasees — fit *totem* for fishermen. — *Schoolcraft, Algic Res.*

The Indian had made a representation of a rattlesnake drawn on his breast with yellow paint. This was to be the *totem* or arms of his tribe. — *Cooper, Oak Openings*, Vol I. p 163.

And they painted on the grave-posts  
 Each his own ancestral *totem*,  
 Each the symbol of his household.

*Longfellow, The Song of Hiawatha.*

**TOTEMIC.** Relating or belonging to the totem.

To show how the aristocratic and democratic principles were made to harmonize in the Iroquois government, it will be necessary to go back and examine the law of descent among the tribes, together with the curious and intricate principles of the *totemic* bond. — *Schoolcraft, Notes on the Iroquois*, p. 126.

**TOTTLISH.** Shaking, vacillating, unsteady.

Our little boat was light and *totlish*; and as I pressed the trigger of my rifle, it rolled slightly over, and my ball passed over the deer. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p 207.

**TOUCH.** *No touch to it*, means, not to compare with it. A common expression in vulgar language.

The children of Israel going out of Egypt with their flocks and their little ones, is *no touch to it* [i. e. the first day of May in New York]. — *Maj. Downing*, p. 30.

**TOUCH-ME-NOT.** (*Impatiens*.) A plant found about brooks, and in moist places. — *Michaux, Sylva*. A popular name for the common Balsam, in allusion to the bursting of its capsules when touched with the fingers. It is also called *Jewel-Weed*.

**TOUSE.** A noise, or disturbance. A Dorsetshire word.

The Loch Katrin, they [the Scotch] make such a *touss* about, is jest about equal to a good sizable duck-pond in our country. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 30.

Marm Lecain makes such an eternal *towse* about her carpets, that I have to go along that everlastin' long entry, and down both staircases to the door, to spit. — *Sam Slick*.

When the rats rattle and kick up a *touse*,  
'T is ominous always of woe to the house.

*Oracles of Mrs. Partington.*

**TOW-BOAT.** A vessel used exclusively for conveying freight. Fleets of barges and canal boats, sometimes numbering forty or fifty, towed by a single steam-vessel, are seen on the Hudson River.

**TOW-HEAD.** 1. A term applied to a white-headed urchin.

2. A white ripple or foam in a river produced by snags or other obstructions. Western.

An account of the blowing up of a steamboat on the Mississippi in 1858, says:

The Pennsylvania drifted down about two miles and a half, where, being stopped by *tow-head*, she speedily burnt to the water's edge.

**TOWHEE GOLDHEAD.** See *Chewink*.

**TOWN.** In New England it is often used for *township*, or a small territorial district, whether densely or thinly inhabited. — *Worcester*.

**TRACK.** The line of a railroad, or rather between the rails. "A man walking on the *track* was run over and killed." A car is said to be "off the *track*," when its wheels are off the rails.

**TRACK-SPRINKLER.** A contrivance for sprinkling railroad tracks, in order to lay the dust.

**TRADE.** Medicine; a medical prescription. A physician informs me that this use of the word is common in the country parts of Rhode Island.

**TRAIL.** 1. Footstep, track, left by man or beast.

Hawkeye entered the water; and for near an hour they travelled in the bed of the brook, leaving no dangerous *trail*. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

2. An Indian footpath or road.

It was the policy of the President of Texas to open a direct road to Santa Fé by a route much nearer than the great Missouri *trail*. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 14.

It is suggested that the respective locations for the Indians might be made, apart from the great Northern and Southern *trails*, thoroughfares of migration, and the settlements limited within certain prescribed boundaries, where the government might protect them from the encroachments of white men. — *Report of the Philadelphia Committee at a meeting in behalf of the Indians*, March 31, 1848.

**TO TRAIL.** "Not worth shucks *to trail*," is a Southern phrase, meaning of little value, not fit to draw home *shucks*; equivalent to the classical expression, "not fit to carry guts to a bear."

They had three or four hounds, and one great big yellow one, what was n't worth *shucks to trail*. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**TRAIN.** (Fr. *traineau*.) A peculiar kind of sleigh used for the transportation of merchandise, wood, etc., in Canada.

**TRAINERS.** The militia when assembled for exercise.

The gentler sex partake, by sympathy at least, in the excitement, by running after the *trainers*. — *Mrs Clavers's Western Clearings*, p. 28.

**TRAINING-DAY.** The day when the militia are called out to be reviewed.

**TO TRAMPOOS.** To tramp. The word is probably of English origin, although not found in the English provincial glossaries.

I felt as lonely as a catamount, and as dull as a bachelor beaver; so I *trampooses* off to the stable. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

So away goes lunch, and off goes you and the "Sir" a *trampoosin'* and a trapsein' over the wet grass agin. — *Ibid*, ch. 23

So we *trampoused* along down the edge of the swamp, till we came to a track. — *Porter's Tales of the South West*, p. 44.

When I got hum, I guess that my narration  
Will make some little stir among the nation.  
Some years ago, I landed near to Dover,  
And seed strange sights, *trampoosing* England over.

*D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England.*

**TRASH.** The leaves of the sugar cane, in the West Indies, stript from the cane to permit it to ripen. These leaves are laid upon the ground, to prevent the sun's influence on the earth, that every moisture possible may be retained for the nourishment of the plant. *Trash* is also used for foddering cattle and thatching houses. — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**TO TRASH CANE.** To strip off the dry leaves from the sugar-cane.

**TO TRASH A TRAIL.** An expression used at the West, meaning to conceal the direction one has taken by walking in a stream, or, in fact, taking to water in any way. The fox, deer, and other animals, understand this mode of escape as well as man.

**TO TREE.** To take refuge in a tree, said of a wild animal; to force to take refuge in a tree, drive to a tree, said of the hunter. To *tree oneself* is to conceal oneself behind a tree, as in hunting or fighting. This hunter's word is purely American.

Besides *treeing*, the wild-cat will take advantage of some hole in the ground, and disappear as suddenly as ghosts at cock-crowing. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 180.

Forty-five years ago there was an extensive religious excitement in Kentucky,

produced by a man partially deranged, who had been a hunter and who believed himself inspired. His proceedings were characterized by the greatest fanaticism, and partook of the character of the man as a hunter. In order to resist the devil and make him flee from you, it was necessary, he contended, to give him chase, *to tree* and shoot him as you would a wolf among the sheep, who came but to devour. As the meeting was held in a grove, one individual suddenly started in pursuit, as he supposed, of the devil; and others of a peculiar nervous temperament, having no power to resist, involuntarily joined in the pursuit: and this was called the "*running exercise*!" One climbed up a tree; and others caught the mania. This was called the "*climbing exercise*!" Another was moved to bark; and soon others, even though they used every method to prevent it, fell to involuntarily barking like dogs, while others gathered round the tree praying for success. This was called "*treeing the devil*!" It was literally a devil chase! And such a time of running, climbing, dog-barking and devil-chasing was, perhaps, never known before or since. — *Evening (Wash.) Star*, May 4, 1854.

**TREE-MOLASSES.** Molasses made from the Sugar-maple tree; a term very common in the West.

**TREE-SUGAR.** Sugar made from the Maple-tree. Western.

**TRIANGLE.** A union of three political parties.

**TRIANGULAR.** A *triangular* contest of any kind is one between three different parties.

**TRICKSY.** Trickish; practising tricks. This old English word is still used in the South and West, where "a *tricksy* horse" is a common expression.

**TRIMMINGS.** The accessories to any dish.

A cup of tea with *trimmings*, is always in season; and is considered as the orthodox mode of welcoming any guest. — *Mrs. Clavers, A New Home*.

The party luxuriated at Florence's [eating-house] on lobster and *trimmings*. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Aug., 1845.

**TO TROLL.** A method of fishing, by a long line attached to the stern of a boat, which is set in motion by sails or muffled oars. A squid, a piece of tin, or a strip of red and white cloth, is attached to the hook, which, passing rapidly along the surface of the water, is seized by the fish. Striped bass and Blue-fish are generally caught in this way.

Those who prefer the more active and invigorating practice of our much admired art, will find *trolling* for this beautiful game fish [the Striped bass] as exciting a recreation as any that comes within the angler's reach. — *Amer. Angler's Guide*, p. 237.

**TRUCK.** 1. Stuff; and especially, vegetables raised for market, called also *market-truck*. South and West.

They purchased homespun, calico, salt, rum, tobacco, and such other *truck* as their necessities called for. — *Chronicles of Pineville*, p. 40.

The fact is, if the people of Georgia don't take to makin' homespun and sich

*truck* for themselves, and quit their everlastin' fuss about the tariff and free trade, the first they'll know, the best part of their population will be gone to the new States. — *Maj. Jones's Travels*.

Now they passed down into Punkatees Neck; and in their march they found a large wigwam full of Indian *truck*, which the soldiers were for loading themselves with — *Church's Indian War*, 1716

"What do the doctors give for the fever and ague?"

"Oh, they give abundance o' *truck*." — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 192.

2. A two-wheeled vehicle drawn by a horse, and used for transporting merchandise. In New England the terms *truck*, *truckman*, and *truckage* are commonly used, instead of cart, cartman, and cartage, employed elsewhere.

The Boston *truck* is constructed of two long parallel shafts, hewn from the best of oak, winter-felled, well-seasoned, and free from faults. These shafts are twenty-five feet long, ten inches wide, and five inches thick; strengthened underneath, in the middle portion, with shorter pieces of the same width. The upper ends of the shafts are cut curving and shaped round, to fit the sides of the wheel-horse. They are then framed together by two transverse pieces; the well-compacted structure is placed upon a low axle, supported by wheels which are three feet in diameter; and thus the *truck* is complete. — *E. Everett, Mount Vernon Papers*, No. III.

TRUCKAGE. The charges for carrying on a truck; cartage.

TRUCKING. The cultivation of vegetables and fruits for market.

TRUCKMAN. The driver of a truck.

The *truckman* is in keeping with his truck and his horses: regularly six feet two in his shoes; stout in proportion; temperate, intelligent, patient. — *E. Everett, Mt. Vernon Papers*, No. III.

TRUCK-PATCH. A piece of ground devoted to rearing vegetables.

TRUSTEE PROCESS. The name given, in the New England States, to the process of foreign attachment. The strict trustee process extends to the goods, effects, and credits of the principal debtor in the hands of his agent, trustee, or debtor, and who, as trustee, is summoned to appear and answer. It does not extend to the real estate in the hands of the trustee. — *Cushing on Trustee Process*.

In personal actions, brought in the court of common pleas or the supreme court, the suit may be commenced by process of foreign attachment, or *trustee process*, in the manner prescribed by law. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

TO TRY ON. To try; to attempt. "I'm too wide awake to be cheated, so you need not *try it on*." A vulgarism of recent origin.

TO TUCK ON. To unduly increase or enhance. "That horse is not worth half what you gave for him. The dealer has *tucked it on* to you pretty well."

TUCKAHOE. 1. (*Sclerotium giganteum*.) The Virginia truffle. A curi-

ous vegetable, sometimes called by the name of Indian Bread or Indian Loaf, found in the Southern States bordering on the Atlantic. It is a natural production, the origin of which has greatly perplexed naturalists, as it is commonly found several feet under the surface, and, like the truffle of Europe, has apparently no stem or leafy appendage connecting it with the external atmosphere. They are generally found through the instrumentality of hogs, whose acute sense of smelling enables them to fix upon the spot where they lie buried. They are usually of a globular or flattened oval shape, and rather regular surface, the large ones resembling somewhat a brown loaf of coarse bread. The size varies from an acorn to the bigness of a man's head. Its name, *tuckahoe*, is Indian, and is said to designate bread. — *Farmer's Encyclopedia*.

Out of the ground the Indians dig earth-nuts, wild onions, and a tuberous root they call *tuckahoe*, which, while crude, is of a very hot and virulent quality; but they manage to make bread of it, etc. — *Beverly's Virginia*, Book III

2. The term *tuckahoe* is often applied to an inhabitant of Lower Virginia, and to the poor land in that portion of the State.

**TUCKERED OUT.** Tired out. Used in New York and New England.

I guess the Queen don't do her eating very aily; for we sot and sot, and waited for her, till we got ecnamost *tuckered out*. — *N. Y. Family Comp.*

How are you this morning, Mis. Ashton?

Law sakes alive! I'm clear *tuckered out* with these young ones. They've had the agur this morning, and are as cross as bear cubs. — *Story of the Bee Tree*.

We fought until we were completely *tuckered out*. When we compared notes, he had got my right eye, and I had chawed off both his ears. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 123.

**TUK, for took.** A vulgar pronunciation, common to North and South.

**TULARE.** A marsh in which Tule abounds. Texas and California.

**TULE.** (*Scripus lacustris*.) The Mexican name for a sort of bulrush covering immense areas in the Sacramento Valley, Klamath Basin, and on the Columbia river.

We enter the square of the Alamo, San Antonio. This is all Mexican. Windowless cabins of stakes, plastered with mud, and roofed with river grass or *tule*, houses of adobes, with groups of brown idlers round the doors. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

Now I found a comfortable house built by putting upright poles in the ground, thatching them with *tules*, and covering the sides with the same. — *Wood's Report to Postmaster-General Brown*, p. 25.

**TULIP-TREE.** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*.) A large tree bearing flowers resembling the tulip. Also called Whitewood.

The *tulip-tree*, high up,  
Opened, in airs of June, her multitude  
Of golden chalices to humming-birds  
And silken-winged insects of the sky. — *Bryant, The Fountain*.



**TUMBLE-BUG.** The Dung-beetle, called in England Tumble-dung.

It is strange, my hearers, that we mortals should be so attached to this mundane sphere of ours. . . . With all its frauds and deceptions, we cling to it, as it turns upon its axis, like a *tumble-bug* to his ball, when it accidentally rolls down hill.—*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 211.

**TO TUMP.** Probably an Indian word. It means to draw a deer or other animal home through the woods, after he has been killed. "We *tumped* the deer to our cabin." Maine.

**TUMPLINE.** A strap placed across the forehead to assist a man in carrying a pack on his back. Used in Maine, where the custom was borrowed from the Indians.

**TUM-TUM.** A favorite dish in the West Indies, made by beating the boiled plantain quite soft in a wooden mortar. It is eaten like a potato pudding, or made into round cakes and fried.—*Carmichael's West Indies*, Vol. I. p. 183.

**TUNA.** (Span.) The fruit of the Pitahaya, or Indian Fig.

Excellent pulque is made here, and a beverage expressed from the juice of the *tuna*, which I tasted for the first time.—*Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 69.

**TUPELO.** See *Pepperidge*.

**TURKEY.** A drunken man is sometimes said to have "got a *turkey* on his back." Perhaps the allusion is to his having won one at a raffle in a drinking-place.

**TURN OF MEAL.** A quantity of grist sent to mill. Tennessee.

**TURNER.** (Germ.) A gymnast.

**TURPENTINE STATE.** The State of North Carolina, so called from the quantity of turpentine obtained from its pine forests.

**TWISTICAL.** Tortuous, perverse. A factitious word.

He may be straight going, farzino, manwards; but in his dealings with t' other sex, he is a leetle *twistical*, according to their tell. I would n't make a town talk of it.—*D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

**TO TWITCH.** To draw timber along the ground by a chain. Used by lumbermen in Maine.

**TYPO,** a contraction of *typographer*. A name sometimes given to compositors in a printing office. *Comp. Jour*.

When a boy, the writer became acquainted with an old bookworm of a man who was in possession of a manuscript written in 1714–1716, by two ambitious *typos*, entitled, "The Desultory Meditations of Two London Printers."—*The Printer*, Dec. 1858.

## U.

**UGLY.** Ill-tempered, vicious. A term applied both to men and animals. It is local in England, and colloquial in the United States.

The questions of the spies were answered in a sullen, swaggering manner; so much so that Captain Caldwell at once remarked to his men, in a low tone and in English, that these fellows looked *ugly* and *fighty*. — *Kendall's Santa Fe*, Vol. I. p. 133.

**UMBRELLA-TREE.** (*Magnolia tripetala*.) The popular name of this tree in the Southern States; from the large leaves closely arranged around the ends of its branches.

**UNCLE.** Used in the Middle and Southern States in accosting an elderly colored man.

**UNCLE SAM.** The cant or vulgar name of the United States government; sometimes called Brother Jonathan. It is used as "John Bull" is in England. Mr. Frost, in his Naval History of the United States, gives the following account of the origin of the name:

"Immediately after the last declaration of war with England, Elbert Anderson of New York, then a contractor, visited Troy, on the Hudson, where was concentrated, and where he purchased, a large quantity of provisions, beef, pork, etc. The inspectors of these articles at that place were Messrs. Ebenezer and Samuel Wilson. The latter gentleman (invariably known as 'Uncle Sam') generally superintended in person a large number of workmen, who, on this occasion, were employed in overhauling the provisions purchased by the contractor for the army. The casks were marked 'E. A. — U. S.' This work fell to the lot of a facetious fellow in the employ of the Messrs. Wilson, who, on being asked by some of his fellow-workmen the meaning of the mark (for the letters U. S., for United States, were then almost entirely new to them), said, 'he did not know, unless it meant *Elbert Anderson* and *Uncle Sam*' — alluding exclusively, then, to the said 'Uncle Sam' Wilson. The joke took among the workmen, and passed currently; and 'Uncle Sam' himself, being present, was occasionally rallied by them on the increasing extent of his possessions.

"Many of these workmen being of a character denominated 'food for powder,' were found, shortly after, following the recruiting drum, and pushing toward the frontier lines, for the double purpose of meeting the enemy and of eating the provisions they had lately labored to put in good order. Their old jokes accompanied them, and before the first campaign ended, this identical one first appeared in print; it gained

favor rapidly, till it penetrated and was recognized in every part of the country, and will, no doubt, continue so while the United States remain a nation."

Mr. Wilson died in Troy, New York, in August, 1854, at the age of eighty-four years; and the Albany Argus, in noticing his death, referred to the circumstance above stated as the origin of the popular soubriquet of *Uncle Sam*.

For I have loved my country since  
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,  
And *Uncle Sam* I reverence,  
Partic'larly his pockets.  
*J. R. Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

UNCOMMON. Uncommonly, very. This adverbial use of the word is heard in the vulgar speech of both England and America.

It struck me with astonishment to hear people huzzaing for me; and took me so *uncommon* unexpected, as I had no idea of attracting attention. — *Crockett, Tour Down East*, p. 17.

UNCONSCIONABLE. Enormous; vast. A low word. — *Johnson*. Used adverbially at the West, as in the following example:

"That's an *unconscionable* slick gal of your'n," says I; and it did tickle his fancy to have her cracked up, 'cause he thought her creation's finishin' touch — so did I! — *Robb's Squatter Life*.

UNDER CONVICTION. *To be under conviction* (scil. of sin), is a common expression, applied to a person who feels a remorse for sins committed, and is desirous to be received into the pale of the church.

A chaplain at one of our state prisons was asked by a friend how his parishioners were "All *under conviction*," was the answer. — *Newspaper*.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD. The means of conveyance by which fugitive slaves are enabled to escape to the free States and Canada.

It is probable that nothing has awakened more bitterly the animosity of the slaveholding community than the existence, in the Northern States, of an indefinite yet very energetic institution, known as the *underground railroad*. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred* Vol. II. p. 302.

He [Connelly] regarded the *underground railroad* as a peculiarly Southern institution, taking away from the South every year thousands of the most intelligent, restless, and desperate negroes, who would do infinitely more mischief if kept there. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1858.

And now, if we may believe the promises made by the Democrats for two years past, we are on the eve of a political millennium. . . . There is to be no more "agitation" of the slavery question. The *underground railroad* is to suspend running, and rejoicing hosts of negroes are to return from the bleak wilds of Canada to the luxurious delights of life on the plantation. — *Albany Evening Journal*, Dec. 1857.

UNDERPINNERS. The legs, which in English flash language are called *pins*.

**UNION.** In a political sense, the connection between the States of North America; also the body of States so connected.

Do the people of the South consider the present *Union* of these States as an evil in itself, and a thing that it is desirable we should get rid of under all circumstances? There are some, I know, who do; but I am satisfied that an overwhelming majority of the South would, if assured that this government was hereafter to be conducted on the true principles and construction of the Constitution, decidedly prefer to remain in the *Union* rather than incur the unknown costs and hazards of setting up a separate government. — *Speech of Hon. J. H. Hammond*, Oct. 27, 1858.

**TO UP JIB.** To be off. A sailor's phrase, much used in familiar language in Nantucket.

**UP TO THE HUB.** To the extreme point. The figure is that of a vehicle sunk in the mud *up to the hub* of the wheels, which is as far as it can go.

"You've hearn tell of the bank and tariff questions?"

"Yes," replied the new editor of the *Eagle* newspaper.

"Well, hoss, we expect you to be right co-chuck *up to the hub* on them thar questions, and pour it into the enemy in slashergaff style." — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 31.

"For my part," said Abijah, grimly, "if things was managed my way, I should n't commune with nobody that did n't believe in election *up to the hub*." — *Mrs. Stowe, Died.* Vol. I. p. 311.

**UPLAND COTTON**, as opposed to Sea Island, is not necessarily raised on high ground; but even near the sea the fibre is shorter than that produced in the limited region known as Sea Island.

**UPPER CRUST.** The higher circles; the aristocracy.

I want you to see Peel, Stanley, Graham, Shiel, Russell, Macanley, old Joe, and so on. They are all *upper crust* here. — *Sam Slick in England*.

**THE UPPER TEN THOUSAND**, or simply, **THE UPPER TEN.** The upper circles of New York, and hence of other large cities. A phrase invented by N. P. Willis.

The Biscaccianti troupe commence their season of Italian opera at the Chestnut to-morrow night. The seats for the first night are already many of them engaged; and engaged too by the very cream of our "*upper ten*;" while the moderate democratic prices of admission which have been wisely adopted, will invite large slices of the honest and hearty masses. — *Letter from Philad. N. Y. Herald*.

Researches in some of the *upper ten* districts  
Reveal the most painful and startling statistics,  
Of which let me mention only a few  
In one single house, on the Fifth Avenue.

*Bulter, Nothing to Wear*

**UPPERTENDOM.** The aristocracy; people of fashion. Comp. *Japonicadom*.

His rich relatives were always in such a panic lest *uppertendom* should discover that their cousins lived in an unfashionable part of the town, dined at one o'clock, and noticed trades-people and mechanics. — *Fanny Fern*.

At a ball for the benefit of the poor was a commingling of *uppertendom* with lower-twentydom — an avalanche of exclusiveness in a torrent of mobocracy. — *Doesticks*, p. 131.

Mr. Duganne, in his poem entitled "Parnassus in Pillory," speaking of N. P. Willis, says :

Gad ! what a polish *uppertendom* gives  
This executioner of adjectives ;  
This man who chokes the English worse than Thuggists,  
And turns the trade to trunk-makers or druggists.

UPSET PRICE. At public auctions an article is sometimes "set up," or "started," by the auctioneer at the lowest price at which it can be sold. This is called the *upset price*.

TO USE UP. To exhaust, wear out.

Moving on the first day of May in New York has *used me up* worse than building forty acres of stonewall. — *Maj. Downing, May Day in New York*.

Well, being out night arter night, she got kinder *used up* and beat out, and unbeknownst to me used to take opium. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 192.

Hans has been really ill ; five days down with severe pains of the limbs, have left him a "little weak," which with him means well *used up*. — *Kane, Arctic Expedition*, Vol. II. p. 100.

## V.

VACHER. (French.) The stock or cattle keeper on the prairies of the South-west. His duty is also to break wild horses, to run cattle, and to brand calves.

TO VAMOSE. (Span. *vamos*, let us go.) Used, in the South-west chiefly, in the sense of to depart, decamp, be off. A curious grammatical perversion.

I couldn't stand more than this stanza, coming from a street voice compared with which the notes of a hand-saw are positively dulcet, and I accordingly *vamosed*. — *N. Y. Mirror*, May, 1848.

Yankee Sullivan's house, corner of Frankfort and Chatham streets, is in a dangerous condition ; its foundation walls having been partially undermined for the purpose of excavating a cellar. Its occupants received some very ominous premonitions of a downfall early yesterday morning, and forthwith *vamosed* with their baggage. — *Journ. of Commerce*, June, 1848.

Madame Anna Bishop gave, on Monday evening last, a spirited exhibition, and not exactly of the vocal powers, for which she is celebrated, but of the woman's temper, of which she has undoubtedly her due portion. The saloon was duly lighted up, and very soon after the doors were opened a respectable number of ladies and gentlemen took their seats. But the Madame appears to have been dissatisfied at the number, and before waiting to see if others would assemble, the audience was unceremoniously dismissed, the lights blown out in a huff, and Madame and Mon-

sieur, fiddles, harps, rosin, catgut and all, *vamosed*. — *Vicksburg Sentinel*, May, 1848.

On Sunday our city was thrown into a state of intense excitement. Between seventy and eighty slaves had disappeared. Several negroes who had made arrangement to *vamose*, were left behind, and, to be revenged, they gave the alarm. — *Washington Paper*.

TO *VAMOSE* THE RANCH. To leave the house, quit the spot, be off. Like the word *vamos*, much used on the Western frontier and in the South. This is surely breaking Priscian's head with a vengeance.

The Camanches came within a league of us, but *vamosed the ranche* when they learned that the rangers were here. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 141.

VARMINT. A corrupt pronunciation of the word *vermin*, applied to noxious wild beasts of any kind. It comes to us from the North of England.

There are more than a hundred lakes and brakes in them diggings, that hain't never been pessed by no mortal 'ceptin' *varmint*s. — *Traits of American Humor*.

I shot tolerably well, and was satisfied the fault would be mine if the *varmint*s did not suffer. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 125.

"These beavers," said old Ryan, "are industrious little fellows. They are the knowingest *varmint* as I know." — *Living's Tour on the Prairies*.

Uncas, call up your father; we have need of all our weapons to bring the cunning *varmint* from his roost. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*, p. 104.

VEGETABLE IVORY. See *Tagua-Nut*.

VEGETABLE MARROW. See *Alligator-Pear*.

VEGETABLE OYSTER. See *Oyster-Plant*.

VEGETARIAN. A disciple of a strict dietetic school, in which animal food is prohibited.

VEGETARIANISM. The doctrines of the Vegetarians.

VENDIBILITY. Salableness.

A great number of manufactured articles derive their *vendibility* almost entirely from the pattern of the design. — *Mr. Sheppard's Speech before Maryland Institute*, 1857.

VENDUE. (French *vendre*, to sell, *vendu*, sold.) A public auction. This word is in use in the United States and the West Indies; but it is not common in England, though it is found in the recent English dictionaries of Knowles, Oswald, and Smart. — *Worcester*. The word, being a wholly unnecessary one, is fast becoming obsolete with us.

VENISON. In the United States this word means exclusively the flesh of deer. In England it is applied to the flesh of deer, hares, and certain game birds.

VEST. A waistcoat, or garment worn under a coat. We almost always

use this word instead of *waistcoat*, which we rarely apply to any thing but an under garment, as “a flannel waistcoat.”

**VIGILANCE COMMITTEE.** A portion of the citizens of a place who, assuming that the regular magistrates are unable or unwilling to execute the laws, undertake to watch over its safety, and to punish its criminals. The most notorious of these self-constituted bodies have been those of San Francisco and New Orleans.

Few people abroad, who had been trained from infancy to revere “the majesty of the law,” and who had never seen any crime but what their own strong legal institutions and efficient police could detect and punish, could possibly conceive such a state of things as would justify the formation and independent action of an association which set itself above all formal law, and which openly administered summary justice, or what they called justice, in armed opposition and defiance to the regularly constituted tribunals of the country. Therefore, in other lands, it happened that the *vigilance committee* became often a term of reproach, and people pointed to it as a sign that society in California was utterly and perhaps irredeemably impure and disorganized. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 562.

A hand-bill having been posted in Richmond, Virginia, calling a meeting of the citizens for this evening, to form a *vigilance committee* to suppress certain secret movements among the colored population and to stop outrages on private property, Governor Wise addressed a letter to Mayor Mayo calling his attention to the movement, and adding that he would use force in prohibiting such meeting from being held on the Capitol square. The Mayor in reply states that, knowing the author of the hand-bill to be one of the few rowdies of that city, he considers himself a “*vigilance committee*” enough for him and his comrades, and therefore deems it unnecessary to adopt any unusual measures against the proposed movement — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, July 1, 1858.

Last month, in the town of Maubeuge, in the north of France, a Protestant congregation was broken up and a part of its members marched on a Sunday from their place of worship to the town jail. The final proceedings of the civil authorities in the case were, according to our American notions of right and law, as gross a violation of justice as *vigilance committee* or lynching mob was ever guilty of. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 30, 1858.

**VIRGINIA CREEPER.** The ornamental woody vine *Ampelopsis quinquefolia*, cultivated for covering walls and fences. By some it is called Woodbine, and by others American Ivy.

**VIRGINIA REEL.** The common name throughout the United States for the old English “country-dance” (*contre-danse*).

**VIRGINNY, or OLD VIRGINNY.** The common negro appellation of the State of Virginia.

**VOYAGE.** Among whalers, each man calls his share of the proceeds of the cruise, which he receives instead of wages, his *voyage*.

**VOYAGEUR.** (French.) A Canadian boatman. — *Worcester*.

The Canadian *voyageur* is, in all respects, a peculiar character; and on no point is

he more sensitive, than in the just distribution of pieces among the crew forming a party. — *Sir John Franklin's Narrative*.

There is no form of wretchedness among those to which the checkered life of a *voyageur* is exposed, at once so great and so humiliating, as the torture inflicted by the mosquitos. — *Bach, Arctic Journal*, p. 117.

I VUM! for *I vow!* is a euphemistic form of oath often heard in New England.

"*I vum*," said he, "I'm sorry; what's the matter?" — *Margaret*, p. 86.

The Rev. Mr. Dow, Jr., in one of his edifying discourses on profanity, not inaptly observes:

What though, instead of saying, "I swear to God," you say, "I declare to goodness?" It is as much the same thing as a bobolink with a new coat of feathers. *I vum* is just the same in spirit as *I vow*, and a "diabolical falsehood" is synonymous with a devilish lie. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 265.

## W.

TO WABASH. "He's *Wabashed*," meaning he is cheated, is an expression much used in Indiana and other parts of the West.

TO WABBLE. In the Western States, to make free use of one's tongue; to be a ready speaker.

WAGGLETAIL. The larva of the mosquito, etc.; also called a wiggler.

TO WAKE SNAKES. 1. To make a rousing noise; and hence to rouse up, get into action.

Well, here I be; *wake snakes*, the day's a-breaking. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 119.

Come, *wake snakes*, and push off with the captain, and get the fish on board. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 164.

2. To have a rousing, roaring time.

Hosea Bigelow (introduced to us by his friend Lowell the poet), in speaking of military service, says:

This goin' where glory awaits ye, haint one agreeable featur';  
And if it warn't for *wakin' snakes*, I'd be home agin short metre "

WAKE-UP. See *Clape*.

TO WAKE UP THE WRONG PASSENGER. To make a mistake in the individual. A modern substitute for the old phrase, "To get the wrong sow by the ear." The allusion is to the custom on board steamboats, of arousing or waking passengers at stopping places at night, when frequent mistakes are made and the wrong person called up.

The tyrant coquette, as a matter of course,  
Thinks her lover must mind the rein just like a horse;



Discouraged he leaves her, she sees her mistake,  
And laments that she did the *wrong passenger wake*.

*The Stage Driver's Ball, Comic Song.*

Sam Slick gives the following account of an interview between an abolitionist preacher and a contented slave. The former addressing the slave, says :

"Poor, ignorant wretch !"

"Massa," replied the negro, "you has *waked up de wrong passenger* dis time. I is n't poor. I ab plenty to eat, and plenty to drink. When I wants money, Missus gives it to me. When I wants wild ducks or venison, all I got to do is, to say to dat Yankee oberseer, 'Missus and I want some canvas-back or some deer.'" — *Human Nature*, p. 289.

TO WALK THE CHALK. To walk straight.

"The Tallapoosa volunteers," said Capt. Suggs; "so let every body look out and *walk the chalk*." — *Simon Suggs*, p. 89.

TO WALK INTO. To get the upper hand of; to take advantage of; to punish. A common vulgarism.

To *walk into* a down-cast land-jobber requires great skill, and a very considerable knowledge of human nature — *Sam Slick*, 3d Series, p. 122.

I went into the dining-room, and sot down afore a plate that had my name writ on a card onto it, and I did *walk into* the beef, and taters, and things, about east. — *Hiram Bigelow's Lett. in Family Comp.*

The way in which the Courier and Enquirer *walks into* the character and reputation of some of their old associates in the Clay movement, is a caution to respectable blackguards, and makes Wall street journalism a rival to Five Point eloquence. — *New York Herald*, Sept. 16, 1858.

WALKING PAPERS, or WALKING TICKET. Orders to leave; a dismissal. When a person is appointed to a public office, or receives a commission, he receives papers or documents investing him with authority; so when he is discharged, it is said, in familiar language, that "he has received his *walking papers*, or his *walking ticket*."

It is probable that "*walking papers*" will be forwarded to a large proportion of the *corps diplomatique* during the session of Congress. B—— and B—— are already admonished to return, and the invitation will be pretty general. — *N. Y. Herald, Letter from Washington*.

We can announce with certainty that the Hon. Mr. D—— has received his *walking ticket*, accompanied with some correspondence with his Excellency that has given him offence. — *Kingston, Canada, Whig*, Dec., 1843.

Mr. Duane was ordered to remove the deposits. He answered that his duty did not require it. In a few hours he got his *walking ticket* that his services were no longer wanted. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 30.

"If you ever question me again," said Mrs. Samson Savage, "you 'll get your *walking ticket* in short order." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 307.

WALL ROCK. Granular limestone, used in the building of walls.

**TO WALLOP.** To beat. Provincial in England and colloquial in the United States.

I grabs right hold of the cow's tail, and yelled and screamed like mad, and *wallopped* away at her like any thing. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 18.

There's nothing like *wallopping* for taking the conceit out of fellows who think they know more than their betters. — *J. C. Neal, Orson Dabbs*.

All I know was *wallopped* into me. I took larnin' through the skin. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*

**WALT.** Crank. A ship is said to be *walt*, when she has not her due ballast, that is, not enough to enable her to bear her sails, and keep her stiff. Hubbard, in his History of New England, speaking of Lamberton's ill-fated ship, says, that "she was ill-built, very *walt*-sided." — *Rev. Alex. Young, note to Chron. of Massachusetts*.

The next year brought a Flemish fly-boat of about 140 tons, which being unfit for a fishing voyage, and wanting lodging for the men, they added unto her another deck, by which means she was carried so high that she proved *walt* and unable to bear sail. — *White, the Planter's Plea*, 1630, p. 1.

In the North of England, *walt* means to totter; to overthrow. — *Halliwell*.

**WAMBLE-CROPPED.** Sick at the stomach; and figuratively, crest-fallen; humiliated. New England.

There stood Capt. Jumper, shaking General Taylor's hand when he came on board the "Two Pollys," trying to get a start in the address, but could not; and then I tried it. I never saw Capt. Jumper so wilted down before — and that made me feel so *wamble-cropt* I could not say a word. — *Maj. Downing, Letter from Baton Rouge*, June 15, 1848.

The Captain looked so awful *womble-cropt*, that I pitied him. I never saw such an uncomfortable looking countenance. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 284.

**WAMPUM.** (A term in the Algonkin languages signifying *white*, the color of the shells most frequent in *wampum* belts.) Shells, or strings of shells, used by the American Indians as money. These, when united, formed a broad belt, which was worn as an ornament or girdle. It was sometimes called *wumpumpeage*, or *wampeage*. See *Peage*.

The Indians are ignorant of Europe's coin. Their own is of two sorts: one white, which they make of the stem or stock of the periwinkle, when all the shell is broken off; and of this sort six of their small beads, which they make with holes to string the bracelets, are current with the English for a penny. The second is black, inclining to blue, which is made of the shell of a fish, which some English call *hens*, Poquahock: and of this sort three make an English penny. Their white money they call *wompam*, which signifies white; their black, Suckanhock, Sucki, signifying black. — *R. Williams, Key to the Indian Language*.

Though the young Indian women are said to prostitute their bodies for *wampumpeaks* and other such like fineries, I could never find any ground for the accusation. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book III.

A Sagamore with a humbird in his care for a pendant, a black hawk on his occiput for a plume, good store of *wampumpeage* begirting his loines, his bow in hand, his quiver at his back, with six naked Indian spatterlashes at his heels for his guard, thinks he is all one with King Charles. — *Wood's New England*, 1634, p. 66.

And there the fallen chief is laid,  
In tassell'd garb of skins arrayed  
And girdled with his *wampum*-braid.

*Whittier, The Funeral Tree.*

**WANGAN.** (Indian.) In Maine, a boat used chiefly by lumbermen for carrying provisions, tools, etc.

Among the dangers [of lumbering in Maine] where life and property are hazarded, is that of "running the *wangan*," — a phrase well understood on the river. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. III. p. 254.

**WAN'T.** A common New England contraction for *was not* and *were not*. Comp. *Aint* and *Haint*.

**WANT TO KNOW.** Among the most common singularities of expression are the following: "I should admire to see him," for "I should like to see him;" " *I want to know!*" and "Do tell!" both exclamations of surprise, answering to our "Dear me!" These last, however, are rarely heard in society above the middling class. — *Lyell's Second Visit*, ch. ix.

**WAPITI.** (*Cervus canadensis*.) The American elk, or stag. Probably the Iroquois name for this noble animal.

**WAPATOO.** A name given by the Oregon Indians to the bulb of the *Sagittaria variabilis*, used by them as an article of food.

**WARDEN.** A town officer in two of the island towns of Rhode Island, New Shoreham and Jamestown, with similar privileges and jurisdiction within his town that justices of the peace have throughout their respective towns and counties. — *Const. of R. I. Revised Statutes of R. I.*, Tit. 25, Ch. 168.

**WAR-PATH.** A march to battle, warlike expedition of the Indians.

The Lenape would not go to the *war-path*, because they did not think it well. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

When on the *war-path*, more than ordinary care is taken to adorn the body, and the process of painting occupies a considerable time. — *Ruxton's Adv. in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 237.

The hunters walked in single file, following their leader, like Indians on a *war-path*. — *Mayne Reid, The Boy Hunters*, p. 254.

**WAR-WHOOP.** The Indian cry of war; a yell made on attacking a foe.

Ere dark pestilence  
Devoured his warriors — laid his hundreds low —

That Sachem's *war-whoop* roused to his defence  
Three thousand bow-men. — *Durfee, Whatcheer*, Canto III.

The red men say that here she walked  
A thousand moons ago;  
They never raise the *war-whoop* here,  
And never twang the bow. — *Bryant*.

We must trust to the experience of men who know the ways of the savages, and who are not often backward when the *war-whoop* is howled. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

**WARM-US.** A sort of roundabout jacket made of homespun cloth, and worn without buttons, being tied across the body by the lower corners. Indiana.

**WARRANT-TRYING.** The magistrates' monthly courts at the cross-roads. Virginia.

**WASTAGE.** The accidental waste of a barrel, box, etc.

**WATER-DOGS.** The Western name for various species of salamanders, or lizard-shaped animals, with smooth, shiny, naked skins; sometimes called Water-puppies and Ground-puppies. In Pennsylvania and the Eastern States they are called Spring-keepers and Man-eaters.

**WATER-LOT.** A lot of building-ground covered by water.

An act passed by the legislature, ceding, for the period of ninety-nine years, all the right and interest which the State of California had in those parts of the city called the Beach and *Water Lots*, provided that twenty-five per cent. of all moneys thereafter arising in any way from the sale or other disposition of the said property should be paid over by the city to the State. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 324.

**WATER-SHED.** A word formed in imitation of the German *Wasserscheide* (water-divide), to denote a height of land which separates waters flowing in different directions; better termed "dividing ridge." See *Divide*.

The crests of the serpentine *water-sheds* gradually diverging towards the Tejon, where there is an impinging of the two masses to such a degree, as to completely envelop the plain. — *Lt. Parke, Pacific Railroad Report*, Vol. VII. p. 5

**WATER-OATS.** See *Canada Rice*.

**WATER-WITCH.** 1. A person who pretends to have the power of discovering subterranean springs by means of the divining rod, made once from the witch-hazel, but now more commonly from the peach-tree.

In many parts of the country not a well is dug without a previous consultation with a *water-witch*; and one who attempts to run counter to the popular delusion is in danger of having his "common sense" doubted.

2. An aquatic bird. See *Dipper*.

**WAYFARING-TREE.** See *Hobble-Bush*.

**WAYS**, for way, distance, space. A very common vulgarism.

It's only a little *ways* down to the village. — *Margaret*, p. 123.

**THERE'S NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT**, i. e. the fact is just so, and not otherwise. A vulgarism of recent origin, equivalent to the common phrase, "*There's no mistake about it*," or, "It's just as I tell you, *and no mistake*."

Jist so, jist so, stranger; you are just about half right, and *there's no two ways about it*. — *Sam Slick*, 3d ser. ch. 7.

*There's no two ways about that*, sir; but arn't you surprised to see such a fine population? — *Hoffman*, *Winter in the West*.

**WAX-MYRTLE**. (Genus, *Myrica*.) A shrub, of which there are several species, bearing a berry covered with a shining wax, which is prepared for commerce by the poor people along the Northern lakes. Also called Candleberry Myrtle.

**WAX-PLANT**. (*Monotropa uniflora*.) A perfectly white, fleshy plant, looking as if made of wax. Before the fruit matures, the heads are bent over; hence the name "Indian Pipe."

**WEAK FISH**. See *Squeteague*.

**TO WEAR THE COLLAR**. In political parlance, to be subject to the control of another; to be directed in political matters.

**WEATHER**. "Fine *weather* overhead," means a clear sky. "We are going to have falling *weather*," means we are going to have rain, snow, or hail. "He's under the *weather*," is a figurative expression, meaning badly off; in straightened circumstances.

**WED**. Sometimes vulgarly used for *weeded*; as, "He *wed* the garden." Comp. *plead* for *pleaded*.

**WEED**. A common term for tobacco; as, "Do you use *the weed*?" meaning, Do you chew tobacco?

Those who were not dancing were seated around the room, some smoking, others chewing *the weed*, still others drinking. — *Mysteries of New York*, p. 89.

By the appearance of the shirt bosoms of some inveterate chewers of *the weed*, I should judge they had been squirting their juice in the face of a north-easter. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**WEEDY-WEEDY**. A plant resembling spinach, much used in the West Indies. — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**WEEVIL**. The name is given in this country to at least six different kinds of insects, two of which are moths, two are flies, and two are beetles. — *Harris, Insects injurious to Vegetation*, p. 18.

**WELL TO DO.** In a state of ease as to pecuniary circumstances; well off.  
— *Holloway*.

By all accounts you are considerable *well-to-do*, and have made an everlastin' sight of money among the Blue Noses of Nova Scotia. — *Sam Slick*.

The old lady being now *well-to-do*, in a spiritual sense. — *Boston Times*.

**WELL TO LIVE.** 1. In easy circumstances; well off. This expression, like the preceding, is of English origin.

I wanted to see how these Northerners could buy our cotton, carry it home, manufacture it, bring it back, and sell it for half nothing; and, in the mean time, be *well to live*, and make money besides — *Crockett, Tour*.

2. In New England, a cant phrase to denote a person in that state of intoxication in which he drives dull care away, and fancies himself at the top round of fortune's ladder.

**WENCH.** In the United States, this word is applied only to black women and girls.

The blushing morn at length came travelling up from the oriental clime, and sowed the earth with pearls and diamonds, that glittered upon the dark bosom of night like jewels upon the brow of an Ethiopian *wench*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 111.

**WENT.** Sometimes used by uneducated persons for *gone*. "Yesterday was Good-Friday, and you should have *went* to church." Pegge includes it among the London vulgarisms.

**WEST.** The Western States of the American Union, especially those lying to the west of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina.

The enterprising, ingenious, and indomitable North; the substantial and magnificent Central States, the great balance-wheel of the system; the youthful, rapidly expanding, and almost boundless *West*; the ardent, genial, and hospitable South, — I have traversed them all. — *Speech of E. Everett*, July 5, 1858.

**WESTERNER.** A native or resident of the West.

**TO WHALE.** 1. To thrash; to beat. Colloquial with us and in the north of England.

2. Usually to *whale away*. To talk vehemently; to harangue.

Professor Stubbins is always a *whalin' away* about the dignity of labor, and has been deliverin' a course o' lectures on the subject. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 289.

I went to Baptist meeting. The elder, as usual, *whaled away* through his nose, thumped the desk, and went over and over the same thing, without ever making the most remote approach to any thing like the shadow of an idea. — *Id.* p. 105.

**WHALER.** A big, strapping fellow.

"He's a *whaler*!" said Rory; "but his face is mighty little for his body and legs." — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 184.

**WHALING.** A lashing; a beating.

But it is possible that we may, at some future time, go to war with England, — her writers and speakers having spoken disparagingly of us, while her actors, half-pay officers, and other travelling gentry, carry their heads rather high in passing through our country, — for which “arrogant” demeanor we are bound to give her a *whaling*! — *N. Y. Tribune*, Aug. 1847.

**WHAP!** An interjection expressive of a sudden blow, like *whack*!

But a day of payment is coming; and if the money ain't forthcoming, out comes a Randolph writ, and *whap* goes your money and liberty. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 109

I began to think smokin' warn't so bad after all, when *whap* went my cigar right out of my mouth into my bosom. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**TO WHAP OVER.** To knock over. New England.

**WHAPPER, or WHOPPER.** Any thing uncommonly large; a monstrous lie. This word is provincial in various parts of England, and is common with us.

“Do you call them large turnips?”

“Why, yes, they are considerably large.”

“They may be so for turnips, but they are nothing to an onion I saw the other day.”

“And how large was the onion?”

“Oh! a monster; it weighed forty pounds.”

“Forty pounds!”

“Yes; we took off the layers, and the sixteenth layer went completely round a demijohn that held four gallons!”

“What a *whopper*!”

“You don't mean to say that I lie?”

“Oh! no; what a *whopper* of an onion, I mean.” — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

Before you lie, brethren, make up your minds to go it strong; for a little callow fib stands but a small chance among the big *whoppers* that are let loose now-a-days. As my friend Pope might have said:

A little lying is a dangerous thing;  
Go your whole length, or never make a spring.

*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 91.

A few years ago, *whapping* great sleeves and big antecedents were all the rage; and what a funny figure our belles did then cut. — *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 21.

**WHAPPING, or WHOPPING.** Very large.

We've got only one crib, and that's a *whappin'* one too. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 67.

A *whappin'* big pan of mush stood in the centre of the table, and a large pan of milk beside it, with lots of corn-bread and butter. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 61.

**WHARF-BOAT.** On the Western rivers the height of the water is so variable that a fixed wharf would be useless. In its place is used a rectangular float, in part covered, for the reception of goods, or for a dram-shop. It is generally aground on the shore side, and is entered by a plank or movable platform. This is a *wharf-boat*.

WHARF-RATS. 1. Rats that inhabit wharves.

2. Thieves that infest the wharves of seaport towns.

WHARVES. Mr. Pickering notices this form of the plural of *wharf*, as peculiar to Americans. The English say *wharfs*. In the Colony and Province Laws of Massachusetts, Mr. Pickering says, he observed the plural *wharfs* (or *wharfes*) as late as the year 1735; but after that period the form *wharves* is used.

WHAT FOR A, is frequently used by Pennsylvanians, instead of "What kind of a," in asking questions. It is a literal translation of the German idiom, "*Was für ein.*" — *New Amer. Cyclopedia*.

WHATCHEER. The shibboleth of the people of the State of Rhode Island. When Roger Williams, the founder of this ancient colony, pushed his way from Salem, Massachusetts, in the year 1636, through the wilderness, he embarked in a canoe with five others, on Sekonk river, and landed near the present site of the city of Providence. As the party approached the shore, they were saluted by a company of Indians with the friendly interrogation of "*What cheer?*" a common English phrase which they had learned from the colonists, equivalent to the modern How do you do? and meant by the natives as Welcome!

The cove where the party landed is called "*Whatcheer Cove*," which term is also applied to the lands adjacent; besides which there is in Providence a "*Whatcheer Bank*," a "*Whatcheer Church*," "*Whatcheer hotels*," a "*Whatcheer Insurance Company*," and, last of all, a "*Whatcheer Lager Beer Saloon*!"

Judge Durfee, a Rhode Island poet, has rendered this event memorable by an interesting poem entitled "*Whatcheer*, or Roger Williams in Banishment." In describing the landing of his hero, he says:

And straight the kindling words burst on his ear,  
 Their shouts, embodied, sought the joyous sky  
 With open arms, and greeting of *Whatcheer*!  
 Lined all the shores, and banks, and summits high.  
*Whatcheer! Whatcheer!* resounded far and near,  
*Whatcheer! Whatcheer!* the hollow words reply;  
*Whatcheer! Whatcheer!* swells the exulting gales,  
 Sweeps o'er the laughing hills, and trembles through the vales.

TO WHEAL. To swell.

The father discovered a gainsome expression of face. . . . His cheeks *whealed* and puffed, and through his lips his laughter exposed his white teeth. — *Margaret*, p. 10.

WHEAT AND INDIAN. A mixture of wheat flour and the meal of Indian corn.



**WHEELING.** The act of conveying on wheels, or driving a wheeled vehicle. It is good or bad *wheeling*, according to the state of the roads.

It is mid-winter still, and there is snow on the ground ; but the sleighing is not as good as it was, and the state of the streets admits *wheeling*. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 30.

**WHEEL-HORSE.** An intimate friend ; one's right hand man. Western.

**WHICH?** An absurd word used by some persons instead of *What?* in asking for a repetition of what has been said.

**WHIG AND TORY.** During the war of the American Revolution, the terms *Whig* and *Tory* were applied — the former to those who supported the revolutionary movement ; the latter to the royalists, or those who adhered to the British government. *Tory* was then a stigma of the most reproachful kind.

**WHIGS AND DEMOCRATS.** It is very difficult to give a precise, accurate, and satisfactory definition of the principles distinctively held by the two great political parties into which the population of the American Union is divided, — one popularly styling itself the *Democratic*, the other the *Whig* party. In point of fact, the satirical definition of the *outs* and the *ins* would not be *very* far out of the way ; for the doctrines of government and legislation theoretically advanced by the *Democratic* party, when out of power, are not so radically diverse from those of the *Whigs* in the same condition, as are the practices of either, when in power, from their professions. As times change and circumstances, the demands or wishes of these parties change also ; so that what was *Whig* doctrine in 1830, may be *Democratic* doctrine in 1850, and *vice versa*.

The nominal distinctions, some years ago, were, on the *Whig* side, a Protective Tariff, a National Bank, Division of the Proceeds of the Public Lands among all the States, and the duty of the General Government to carry on works of Public Improvement, such as Canals, Roads, etc., etc.

The *Democrats* were for Free Trade, no connection of the government with Banking, distribution of the proceeds of the Public Lands among the States in which the lands lie, and non-interference by the government with Internal Improvements.

But all these questions have rarely been brought to the practical test. Absolute free trade has ever been impracticable, because it would deprive the government of the revenue derived from imposts. The government has always been obliged to carry on some kind of financial operations, differing more in name than in reality from a system of banking considered as a means of supplying a currency. The public lands have rarely yielded any proceeds beyond the wants of the government. And the

only real question, fairly at issue, has been that of improvement in public works.

The *Democrats* popularly charge upon the Whigs a desire to strengthen and centralize the National Government, declaring themselves to be in favor rather of strengthening the local governments of the several States, and of limiting, as far as constitutionally possible, the agency of the National Government, or government of the Union; but in practice the Democratic party is ready enough to assume power for the General Government when any thing is to be gained by so doing; and in this, as in most other instances, the difference between the two parties lies rather in words than in deeds.

The *Whigs*, on the other hand, popularly charge upon the Democrats an undue degree of subserviency to the Executive, especially since the elevation of General Jackson to the presidency in 1829; and this charge seems to have more foundation in truth. It is certain, at all events, that the three Democratic presidents, Jackson, Van Buren, and Polk, have found a more zealous and unscrupulous support in questionable measures than was ever given to a Whig president, or indeed to any of their predecessors.

Perhaps, on the whole, it may be truly said, that the main practical difference between the *Whigs* and *Democrats* lies in the fact that the latter give a more unhesitating and thorough-going support to all measures which involve the question of party-measures, which become, by any means party tests, whether emanating from the Executive or adopted by him under impulse from his adherents. — [*J. Inman.*]

**WHIGGISM, or WHIGGERY.** Whig principles; the doctrines of the Whig party. These words have, in the United States, lost their original opprobrious meaning, and are frequently used by the Whigs themselves in speaking of their doctrines.

Professor Amasa Walker here came forward, and said they all stood together upon the same platform, and he had heard too much of *Whiggery* about their proceedings already; and as they stood upon a broad platform, he as a Democrat protested against their throwing in so much *Whiggery* and entertaining them about Gen. Taylor's white horse. — *Rep. of a Freesoil Convention at Worcester, Mass., June 28, 1848.*

The Whigs in Boston see by the movement in New York, and by accounts from Ohio, that there is a chance, at least, of General Taylor being vigorously opposed by some men of undoubted *Whiggery* in influential States. — *Letter from Boston, in N. Y. Herald, June 21, 1848.*

**WHILE, for till.** "Stay *while* I come," instead of, Stay *till* I come. Used in the Southern States. — *Sherwood's Georgia.*

**TO WHIP THE CAT.** I can give no other explanation of the phrase than

to quote the following passage by Mr. Goodrich, who, in describing the early customs of New England, says :

Twice a year the tailor came to the house and fabricated the semi-annual stock of clothes for the male members, thus being called *whipping the cat*. — *Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 74.

**TO WHIP THE DEVIL ROUND A STUMP.** To make false excuses to one's self and others for doing what one likes.

While Mr Jones is describing his wants in the money line, and telling the president how "near through" he is, that officer is carrying on a mental addition, it may be after this manner: "Jones, you're a clever fellow, but Smith tells me you are engaged in a coal stock operation. I have heard also that you have been dabbling in Erie. There is a want of candor now, I perceive, in the statement of your affairs. There, you are now *whipping the devil around the stump*; I see his foot." — *N. Y. Evening Post*, 1857.

**WHISKEY-ROOT.** A plant of the Cactus species possessing intoxicating properties, which is thus described by a correspondent of the New Orleans Picayune: "It is what the Indians call Pie-o-ke. It grows in southern Texas, on the range of sand-hills bordering on the Rio Grande, and in gravelly, sandy soil. The Indians eat it for its exhilarating effect on the system, it producing precisely the same as alcoholic drinks. It is sliced as you would a cucumber, and these small pieces chewed, the juice swallowed, and in about the same time as comfortably tight cock-tails would 'stir the divinity within' you, this indicates itself; only its effects are what I might term a little more *k-a-v-o-r-t-i-n-g*, giving rather a wilder scope to the imagination and actions."

**WHITE FISH.** See *Menhaden*.

**WHITE FROST.** Hoar-frost. Western.

**WHITE SETTLEMENTS.** The settlement of Kentucky, the first Western State, was by an emigration from Virginia through the Cumberland Gap. The fertile soil, which was the temptation, lay in the middle of the State; and the surrounding region, being comparatively poor (except in coal and iron), was neglected, although traversed by the whole emigration. The centre, or "Garden spot," was called "*The White settlements*," while Indians still lingered on its outskirts.

Now that these comparatively poor regions of the State have become inhabited, the name is still retained, and without explanation would be deemed absurd; for all the Indians have disappeared long ago, and negroes are only to be found in numbers on the large farms of these very *white settlements*.

The phrase seems to be used only by those who live between the mountains and the region so designated, in which the term is never used, although well understood. — [*G. O. Schaeffer*.]

**WHITE TRASH.** A term applied, especially by negroes, to the poor white people of the South. See *Poor White folks*.

In social relations the negroes are sensitive to the overbearing propensities of a proprietary who are accustomed to regard all neighbors out of their own class as *white trash*. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

Of all the pizen critters that I knows on, these ere mean *white trash* is the pizenest. They aint got no manners and no bringing up. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II.

"The fact is," said Mr. Gordon, "what with niggers, and overseers, and *white trash*, my chances of salvation are dreadfully limited." — *Ibid.* Vol. I. p. 271.

**WHITEWOOD.** See *Tulip-Tree*.

**WHIT-POT.** A kind of pudding. New England. It is the *White-Pot* of Devonshire.

**WHIT-POTTING.** A term used in Nantucket for visiting among relations and friends.

**TO WHITTLE.** To cut or dress with a knife. The word as well as the practice of *whittling* for amusement is so much more common with us, especially in New England, than in the old country, that its use may not improperly be regarded as an Americanism.

Dexterity with the pocket-knife is part of a Nantucket education; but I am inclined to think the propensity is national. Americans must and will *whittle*. — *N. P. Willis*.

In the "Yankee Ballad" by Miss Abby Allin, in speaking of the New Englander, she says:

No matter where his home may be—  
What flag may be unfurled,  
He 'll manage by some cute device  
To *whittle* through the world.

The Pierce administration, which came into power with a majority of eighty, has now been *whittled* down to ten, as appeared by the vote on the Ostend convention. — *Providence Journal*.

**WHITTLED.** Tipsy, drunk.

**WHOLE CLOTH.** A lie *made out of whole cloth*, is one in which there is no admixture of truth.

Isn't this entire story about your Jersey grandmother *made out of whole cloth*—spun on your own wheel, with your tongue for the spindle? — *C. Matthews, The Motley Book*, p. 68.

**WHOLE-FOOTED.** Sound.

So Mr. D—— has shown his cloven foot to the South at last. I never believed he was *whole-footed*. I never had confidence in him. — *Richmond South*, Dec. 1857.

**WHOLE HEAP.** Many; several; much; a large congregation. An expres-

sion peculiar to certain parts of the South and West.—*Sherwood's Georgia*.

**WHOLE-SOULED.** Noble-minded. A phrase in great favor with persons fond of fine talking and fine writing, like the following extract from a rhapsody about a fourth of July oration of Mr. Choate's :

The soaring and revelling ideas, the *whole-souled* patriotism, the gorgeous word-painting, the flow and headway of resistless emotion, were all suited to the audience, which hung entranced upon the lips of the orator. — *Boston Journal*, July, 1858.

**WHOLE TEAM.** To say that a man is a *whole team*, signifies, in Western parlance, that he is possessed of uncommon powers of body or mind.

Among other amplifications of the phrase is that of a *whole team and a horse to spare*.

The author of a series of lively sketches in Blackwood's Magazine, on "Canada and the North-west States," says :

I once heard a Yankee describe the greatest friend he possessed in the world, as "a *hull team and a horse to spare*, besides a big dog under the wagon." — Vol. LXXVIII p. 336.

In a sketch of fashionable society in New York, the writer thus speaks of a specimen of Young America :

Here's the first curiosity of the place. He's just three years old rising ; can drive a horse on a straight road ; eats every thing he can get, and drinks every liquid in the house except ink. Is n't he a beauty ? Is n't he a *whole team and one horse extra* ? — *The Upper Ten Thousand*.

**WHOOSH.** A term used in backing a horse. I have never heard this word except in Nantucket. In Moor's Suffolk Glossary it is defined as "an imperative, commanding the fore-horse of a team to bear to the left." Mr. Forby, on the contrary, in his Norfolk Glossary, says "*Woosh wo !*" means "Go to the right." Both authors derive it from the French *gauche*.

**WICKET.** A place of shelter, or camp made of the boughs of trees, used by lumbermen in Maine.

**WICOPY.** See *Leather-Wood*.

**WIDE AWAKE.** On the alert ; ready ; prepared.

Miss Harriet had more clothes and more money than the rest ; because she was always *wide awake*, and looking out for herself. — *Mrs. Stowe's Dred*, Vol. I. p. 210.

In the morning, and before sunrise, Bogard, who was a Yankee and a *wide awake* fellow, thrust his head out from under his robe, exclaiming, as he grasped for his gun, "By darn, look at old Cale !" — *Catlin's North Am. Indians*, Vol. I. p. 71.

**WIGGLE.** To bend the body rapidly from side to side ; to wriggle, as a fish or tadpole.

**WIGGLE-TAIL.** The popular name for the larva of the mosquito.

Standing by a shallow, half-stagnant pool on a midsummer's day, the full development of any number of "*wiggle-tails*" to the mosquito state can be witnessed, and the origin of these disturbers of night's slumbers thus fully ascertained. — *Scientific American*.

**WIGWAM.** An Indian cabin or hut, usually made of skins. The word is Algonkin, and occurs in variously modified forms in the languages of that family.

Dark as the frost-nipp'd leaves that strew'd the ground,  
The Indian hunter here his shelter found;  
Here cut his bow and shaped his arrows true,  
Here built his *wigwam* and his bark canoe. — *Brainard, Connecticut River*.

**WILD BEAN.** (*Phaseolus diversifolius*.) A plant common in the alluvial bottoms of the West, the Wild Potato of the Sioux Indians, much used as food.

**WILD-CAT.** A bank in Michigan had a large vignette on its notes representing a panther, which animal is familiarly called there a *Wild-cat*. This bank failed, having a large amount of its notes in circulation, which notes were afterwards denominated *Wild-cat* money, and the bank issuing them the *Wild-cat* bank. Other banks were compelled to stop payment soon after, in consequence of the want of confidence in them; and the term became general in Michigan, to denote banking institutions of an unsound character. The term Blue-pup money had a similar origin, as distinguished from *Red Dog*, which see.

We had to sell some of our land to pay taxes on the rest — and then took our pay in *Wild-cat* money, that turned to waste paper before we could get it off our hands. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 91.

The Leavenworth (Kansas) Ledger, in announcing that the American Bank in this city had suddenly exploded, remarks: "There are thousands of dollars of its notes in the hands of the citizens of this city and vicinity; how the notes obtained a circulation here is a mystery to us, and we know not to whom the blame, if any, attaches; certain it is that we are overrun with a *wild-cat* currency from all God's creation, and every day or two we notice batches of new issues scattered amongst us." — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, July 8, 1858.

Our banks are always willing to offer loans and facilities to speculators and *wild-cat* business men to operate with, and it is through their assistance that the business of the country is disarranged. — *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

**WILD CHERRY.** (*Cerasus virginiana*.) A large American tree, bearing a small, astringent fruit resembling a cherry. The wood is much used for cabinet work, being of a light color and a compact texture. — *Browne's Sylva Americana*.

**WILD INDIGO.** (*Baptisia tinctoria*.) A plant found in the woods, yielding a small quantity of indigo.

**WILD LAND.** Land which has never been settled and cultivated ; forest.

**WILD OATS.** (*Avena fatua*.) A variety of oats which grows wild upon all the hills and higher lands of California, furnishing the best forage. It was probably introduced by the Spaniards.

**WILD POTATO VINE.** See *Mechoacan*.

**WILD RICE.** (*Zizania aquatica*.) A tall, tubular, reedy water-plant, found in abundance on the marshy margins of the Northern lakes, and in the plashy waters on the upper courses of the Mississippi. Its leaves and spikes, though much larger, resemble those of oats, whence the French name, *folles avoines*. Millions of migrating water-fowls fatten on it before taking their autumnal flight to the south ; while it furnishes the northern savages and the Canadian traders and hunters with their annual supplies of grain.

At the time of our visit, *wild rice* was growing abundantly over almost all the whole surface of Lake Koshkonong, giving to it more the appearance of a meadow than a lake. — *Lapham's Antiquities of Wisconsin*, p. 35.

**To WILT.** 1. To droop ; to wither, as plants or flowers cut or plucked off. — *Holloway*. A word common in the United States, and provincial in England, where *welk* and *welt* are used in the same sense. — *Worcester*.

Miss Amy pinned a flower to her breast ; and when she died, she held the *wilted* fragments close in her hand. — *Margaret*, p. 213.

2. *To wilt down*, is a figurative expression used of a person who hangs his head, looks sheepish.

Some cotton fellar here bid sixty dollars [for the slave], and she *wilted* right down. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

"Doctor Peter Jones," ses he, "I interduce you to their Majestys the King and Queen."

Cousin Pete scraped about a while, and then dropt on one knee rite afore 'em.

"Rise, gallant knight!" ses Bill Byers ; "aise, we dub you knight of the royal bath."

Cousin Pete got up and bowed and scraped a few more times, and went to sit down between 'em, but they ris up jest as he went to set down ; and the first thing he knowed, kerslosh he went, rite into a big tub of cold water, with nothing but his head and heels stickin out. Pete got out as quick as he could, and I never seed a feller so *wilted down* in all my life. — *Maj. Jones's Courtship*.

**WINDFALL.** The track of a whirlwind or tornado in a forest, where the trees are laid prostrate.

In the country around Angelica were what were called *windfalls*. . . . These *windfalls* were great places for rabbits and partridges, and it was no great thing to boast of to kill a dozen or two of these birds of an afternoon. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 220.

**TO WIND UP.** To close up; to give a quietus to an antagonist in debate. Also intransitively, to shut up; to stop business.

John Bell of Tennessee, that unmistakable Whig, has rung out a clear and far-sounding note of alarm concerning this Mexican war. He is as serious as a preacher, and as downright as a sailor in the delivery of his sentiments. A lively dialogue, constituting a kind of interlude to his speech, sprang up between him and Mr. Cass, in which he pretty effectually "*wound up*" the senator from Michigan. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

Several of the Western banks will be compelled to *wind up* in consequence of their losses and the severe pressure. — *N. Y. Herald*, Sept 1857.

**WINKLE-HAWK.** (Dutch, *winkle-haak*.) An angular rent made in cloth, etc. It is also called a *winkle-hole*. A New York term.

**WINTER-BERRY.** See *Alder*.

**WINTER-CHERRY.** See *Ground Cherry*.

**WINTER-KILLED.** Killed by the cold of winter, as wheat, clover, etc.

**TO WIPE OUT.** A phrase employed by the Indians and hunters of the West, meaning to exterminate, annihilate a person or tribe.

They [the Camanches, Apaches, and others] had met for the purpose of forming their own party, in order, as they, in their strong language, said, to *wipe out* all frontier Indians they could find on the plains. — *Report of Com. of Indian Affairs for 1854*, p. 90.

The Pima Indians have got up another quarrel with the Apaches, and have mustered upwards of a thousand warriors to give them battle. It is their determination to "*wipe out* the Apaches," or, as they express it, to eat them up entirely, which is a consummation devoutly to be wished. — *Alta Californian*, July, 1858.

"We are coming to Lawrence," said the Missourians, "in a few days, to *wipe out* the damned abolition city, and to kill and drive off every one of the inhabitants." — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 222.

The Mormon militia under Brigham Young intend to take a stand at the pass in the mountains near Bear River, with the certainty of *wiping out* the U. S. forces sent against them. — *Letter from Utah*, *N. Y. Times*, Nov. 1857.

**WIRE-EDGE.** The *wire-edge* of a tool is that stage in the process of sharpening it when a delicate roll or strip of metal resembling a fine wire still adheres to the edge, and which of course must be removed before the implement can be in proper order to cut. Some persons, however, seem to imagine that a *wire-edge* is a fine edge, and hence absurdly use the term in such phrases as to take off the *wire-edge* of one's appetite, of a horse's spirit, etc.

He trotted the first mile in 2 : 55, and the second in 2 : 45, and was then stopped. On commencing again he had, of course, lost the "*wire-edge*" of his speed, yet he trotted nineteen miles in 57 : 43. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.



**WIRE-PULLERS, or WIRE-WORKERS.** A term denoting those who, by their secret plots and intrigues, control the movements of the puppets on the political stage.

The coming contest is to decide whether the people have the privilege of electing a chief magistrate of their own selection, or only the privilege of electing one of two candidates whom self-elected cliques of nominators choose to designate. The Philadelphia Convention will assemble on Wednesday; already that city is filled with *wire-pullers*, public opinion manufacturers, embryo cabinet officers, future ambassadors, and the whole brood of political make-shifts, who contrive to live out of the public purse by abusing public credulity. — *N. Y. Mirror*, June 5, 1848.

In another case, at a nominating convention, a "surprise candidate," youthful in age, and in all other qualifications far inferior to his competitors, obtained the nomination. There was no longer any surprise about the matter when it was subsequently ascertained that the *wire-workers* in convention had a deep interest in a particular suit at law, to which their candidate was pledged to give a judgment in their favor, in case of being the judge. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Sept. 20, 1858.

**WIRE-PULLING, or WIRE-WORKING.** Political managings.

Those who were candidates for office in either house [of the legislative assembly of N. Mexico] and their friends began the system of electioneering so prevalent in other sections of the Union; and the few days that intervened between the arrival of the members and the meeting of the assembly were spent in *wire-pulling*, log-rolling, and all the other strategic movements known in modern politics. — *Davis, El Gingo*, p. 251.

**WIRE-WORM.** (*Elatér lineatus*.) The name Wire-worm is given by farmers to the larvæ of various species of beetles belonging to the genus *Elatér*, of which a large number are known both in Britain and in this country. These larvæ are exceedingly destructive, feeding upon the roots and the underground stems of wheat, Indian corn, grape-vines, and most varieties of cultivated vegetables.

**TO WISE.** A spinning top is said to *wise*, when it inclines from the perpendicular.

**WISH-BONE, or WISHING-BONE.** The breastbone of a fowl is so familiarly called, especially by children, from a custom connected with it. The bone, after being dried, is taken by two persons, who hold each shank between their fore-finger and thumb, and then pull until it breaks, at the same time *wishing* for something. The one in whose fingers the larger portion remains, it is said, will have his *wish*.

**WITNESS-TREES.** In newly settled countries at the West, every mile square is marked by "blazed" trees, and the corners especially distinguished by stakes, whose place is pointed out by trees called *witness-trees*. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*, p. 3.

**WOLFISH.** Savage. A Western word.

You must fight or play; so take your choice, for I feel most *wolfish* and savage-rous. — *Sam Slick*, 3d ser. p. 117.

They 'd been fightin' the barrel of whiskey mightily comin' up, and were perfectly *wolfish* arter some har of the dog. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 121.

**WOLVERINES.** The people of the State of Michigan; who are said to be so called from the large number of the mischievous prairie wolves found there.

**WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.** An assemblage of persons who endeavor by public discussions to improve the social and political condition of women.

Thousands of parrots passed over, with their peculiar short and querulous note. In the morning and towards night they kept up the most vehement chattering, all talking and none listening, after the manner of a *Woman's Rights Convention*. — *Bard's Waukena*, p. 89.

**WONDERS.** In Nantucket, a kind of cake.

**TO WOOD UP.** 1. To lay in a supply of wood, as a steamboat at a landing-place. The boats on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, in their long voyages, are obliged to make frequent stops for this purpose.

The process of *wooding-up* is one of the first the passenger is made acquainted with. The steamer approaches a dreary shore, without any thing to indicate that civilized man has ever set his foot upon it for many miles above or below, save the wood-pile and a small cabin of the rudest description. The terms are usually agreed upon before the boat touches the bank; and when it does, fifteen or twenty hands throw on board from twenty to fifty cords, at a price varying from two to three dollars, for which the woodman pockets his money and seems a happy man, although cut off from the world. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1848.

2. To take a dram. Western.

**WOODBINE.** See *Virginia Creeper*.

**WOODING-PLACE.** A station on the banks of a river where the steamboats stop to take in supplies of wood.

**WOODCHUCK.** (*Arctomys monax*.) The ground hog, a rodent mammal of the marmot tribe. It burrows, and is dormant in winter.

Yea, verily, this is like a *woodchuck* in clover. — *Margaret*, p. 48.

My dear hearers, I've been trying to beat [certain truths] into you with a sermonizing sledge-hammer; and you appear to be as stupid as *woodchucks* in winter. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 155.

**WOOD MEETING.** The name given by the Mormons to a Camp-meeting.

**WOOL OVER THE EYES.** To *draw the wool over one's eyes*, is to impose upon one, take one in.

Elder Sniffles ain't so big a fool as to have *the wool drawed over his eyes* by such trash as Sall Hugle. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**WOOLLY-HEADS.** A term applied in the first place to negroes, and then to anti-slavery politicians.

The law, it seems, it did n't work exactly as it ought,  
Though Greeley kept a sayin' so, and so his readers thought.  
They 're mighty bright, them *woolly-heads*; they think they find a prize,  
If they can only pull their wool o'er other people's eyes.

*New York Paper.*

**WORM FENCE.** A rail fence laid up in a zig-zag manner. See *Stake and Rider*.

Mr. Haskell, one of the delegates from Tennessee, told a story about a man in his "diggins," who was once struck by "Joe Larkins," by which he was knocked at least forty rods. He fell against a *worm fence*, and carried away about forty panels, rail-riders and all. — *N. Y. Mirror*.

We drove master Jack about the common, until we had hemmed him in an angle of a *worm fence*. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 251.

**WORRYMENT.** Trouble, anxiety.

The *worryment* we have lately had about money has set you a dreaming. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**WORST KIND.** Used in such phrases as, "I gave him the *worst kind* of a licking." Also adverbially; as, "I licked him the *worst kind*," i. e. in the worst manner possible, most severely.

**WRAPPER.** A loose dress or gown.

Her dress was a blue-striped linen short-gown, *wrapper*, or long-short, a coarse petticoat, checked apron, etc. — *Margaret*, p. 14.

**WRAPPERS.** See *Leggings*.

**WRATH.** *Like all wrath*, is a Southern phrase, meaning, violently; vehemently; angrily.

There ain't much to interest the traveller on the railroad from Hamburg to Charleston. Most of the passengers in the car were preachers what had been up to Augusta to attend the convention. They was the dryest set of old codgers I ever met with, till the jolting of the cars shook up their ideas a little, and then they fell to disputin' *like all wrath*. — *Maj. Jones's Travels*.

**WRATHY.** Very angry. A colloquial word. — *Webster*.

Oh! you're *wrathy*, ain't ye? Why, I did n't mean nothin' but what was civil! — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 103.

The general was as *wrathy* as thunder; and when he gets his dander up, it's no joke. — *Maj. Downing's Letters*, p. 34.

**WRECKERS.** A gang of Baltimore rowdies.

## Y.

**YALLER.** A vulgar pronunciation of *yellow*.

**YAM.** (Genus *Dioscorea*.) A large esculent tuber or root of various climbing plants growing in tropical America, which forms a wholesome and palatable food.

**YANK.** A jerk. New England.

In some verses prefixed to the New-Year's Address of the carrier of "The Age," a weekly journal published in Maine, the Carrier Boy asks the spirit of Edgar A. Poe to write him a few lines.

The poet looks wild at the blue-eyed child,  
Then clutches him by the hair,  
And makes him abide by the chimney-side,  
As he sinks back in his chair —

Pulls up the machine, and with dreadful mien  
He oils each rusty wheel,  
Then seizes the crank, and with many a *yank*  
Brings out a poetic squeal.

**TO YANK.** To twitch or jerk powerfully. New England.

**YANKEE.** 1. The popular name for the citizens of New England, but applied by foreigners to all the inhabitants of the United States. The name [*Yengees* or *Yenkees*] was originally given by the Massachusetts Indians to the English colonists, being the nearest sound they could give for "English." It was afterwards adopted by the Dutch on the Hudson, who applied the term in contempt to all the people of New England. During the American Revolution, it was eagerly caught at by the British soldiers. — *Note to the Poetical Works of J. Trumbull.*

Mr. Heckewelder, a high authority on Indian subjects, has no doubt that the word was the first effort of the Indians "to imitate the sound of the national name of the English, which they pronounced *Yengees*." Furthermore he says, the Indians "say they know the *Yengees* [i. e. the New Englanders], and can distinguish them by their dress and personal appearance, and that they were considered as less cruel than the Virginians, or Long Knives. The English proper they call Saggenash." — *Hist. Acc. of the Indian Nations*, p. 132.

Judge Durfee, in his poem called "Whatcheer: or, Roger Williams in Banishment," thus mentions the English under this name:

"Ha! *Yengee*," said the Sachem, "wouldst thou go  
To soothe the hungry panther scenting blood?"

Canto III. 32.

Base Wampanoag! we'll devour that clan,  
And drive the *Yengees* back o'er ocean blue.

Canto IV. 38.

An interesting article on this word in "Notes and Queries" (1852, p. 57), by Mr. T. Westcott of Philadelphia, contains a letter from the Rev. Mr. Gordon, giving an account of the skirmishes at Concord and Lexington, in which he says:

They [the British troops] were roughly handled by the *Yankees*, a term of reproach for the New Englanders, when applied by the regulars.

2. In New England, a glass of whiskey sweetened with molasses; a common beverage in the country.

You fine Miss Boston lady gay,  
For this your speech I thank ye,  
Call on me when you come this way,  
And take a dram of *Yankee*.

*Fessenden. Yankee Doodle Song.*

YANKEEFIED. After the Yankee fashion; like a Yankee.

The Colonel whittled away at a bit of stick in the most *Yankeefied* way possible.  
— *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 113.

YANKEELAND. 1. New England.

2. The United States.

YANKEE DOODLE. There has been much discussion as to the origin of the term *Yankee Doodle*, and of the well-known tune which bears this name, without coming as yet to any very satisfactory conclusion. In England the air has been traced back to the time of Charles I.; and it appears that the doggerel verses that are sung to it can claim nearly as respectable an antiquity. This, however, is not all. The song is said to be identical with one sung by the agricultural laborers in the Netherlands. Kossuth and his fellow Hungarians, when in this country, are said to have recognised it as one of the old national airs of their native land. And recently Mr. Buckingham Smith, our then Secretary of Legation at Madrid, has asserted that it is the ancient Sword Dance of the Biscayans.

YEATH, for *earth*. A vulgar pronunciation among the illiterate at the South.

Why, you don't look like the same man. I never should have know'd you.  
What upon *yeath* has brung you out so? — *Maj. Jones's Sketches*.

YEATHQUAKE, for *earthquake*. A Southern vulgarism, like the previous word.

The Girard College is all solid brick and marble. Fire can't get hold of wood enough to raise a blaze, and the walls are so thick and strong that nothin' short of

Florida lightnin' or a South American *yeathquake* could n't knock it down. — *Maj. Jones's Sketches.*

**YELLOW.** A term applied to colored boys and girls whose complexion tends towards white; those of a darker hue are called "brown."

Law sakes, Miss Phillis, does you tink I have no sense; I hate a *yaller gal* as I do poison. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature.*

**YELLOW COVER** (pron. *yaller kiver*). A notice of dismissal from government employment. So called from its being usually enclosed in a yellow envelope.

**YELLOW HAMMER.** (*Picus auratus*.) The popular name of the Golden-winged Woodpecker, the most beautiful of the genus. It is known, by other names in different parts of the country, as High-hole, Yacker, Clape, etc.

**YELLOW JACKET.** A small wasp, well known for its terrible sting.

**YELLOW ROOT.** (*Zanthorhiza apiifolia*.) A plant whose roots are used as a dye by the Indians. It is also medicinal.

**YELLOW THROAT.** A small singing bird of the warbler species.

**YERE.** A Southern pronunciation for *here*.

"Why is it, my son, that when you drop your bread and butter, it is always butter side down?"

"I don't know. It had n't oughter, had it. The strongest side ought to be uppermost, had n't it, ma? And this *yere* is the strongest butter I ever seed." — *Cairo (Illinois) Times*, Feb. 28, 1855.

**YOPON.** (*Ilex vomitoria*.) North Carolina tea. A plant indigenous to North Carolina; and when the leaves are dried by slow heat, and infused in water, it is used as a beverage. It is slightly intoxicating. It belongs to the same genus of plants as the celebrated Maté (*Ilex paraguayensis*) of South America. •

**YOU DON'T!** for *you don't say so!* i. e. really! indeed! "Mr. Grimaldi threw a back somerset out of a three-story window." "Now, *you don't!*"

**YOURN.** This is a contraction of *your own*, or a change in the termination of the pronoun *yours*, in conformity with *mine*, and which is much used by the illiterate and vulgar. It is also used in London and in the West of England. "The cockney," says Mr. Pegge, "considers such words as *our own* and *your own* as pronouns possessive, a little too much expanded; and, therefore, thinks it proper to curtail them, and to com-

press them into the words *ourn* and *yourn*, for common daily use." — *Anecdotes of the English Language*, p. 193. Compare *Hern* and *Hisn*.

YUCKER. See *Clape*.

## Z.

ZAPOTE. See *Sapote*.

ZEEWAN. See *Seawan*.





## A P P E N D I X .

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### P R O V E R B S .

Ambition is as hollow as the soul of an echo.

Tide, steamboats, and soda water will wait for no one.

Big feet, like a leather shirt, are more for use than ornament.

Money slips from the fingers like a watermelon seed, travels without legs, and flies without wings.

It is the lot of humanity to err at times, as the drunken man said when he mistook the pig-pen for his bedroom.

A good deed will stick out, with an inclination to spread, like the tail of a peacock.

Evil actions, like crushed rotten eggs, stink in the nostrils of all.

You might as well undertake to whistle a grape-vine from a white-oak, as to induce a girl to relinquish her lover.

Vice is a skunk that smells awfully rank when stirred up by the pole of misfortune.

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### S I M I L E S .

As big as all out of doors.

As dry as the clerk of a lime-kiln.

As long as a thanksgiving sermon.

As crooked as a Virginia fence.

As straight as a loon's leg.

As straight as a shingle.

As sharp as the little end of nothing.

As slick as greased lightning.

As smiling as a basket of chips.

As happy as a clam at high-water.

As tight as the bark of a tree.  
 As crazy as a bedbug.  
 As mad as all wrath.  
 As wrathful as a militia officer on a training-day.  
 As proud as a tame turkey.  
 As melancholy as a Quaker meeting-house by moonlight.  
 As useless as whistling psalms to a dead horse.  
 Like all nature.  
 Like all fury.  
 Like all possessed.  
 Thrashing round like a short-tailed bull in fly-time.  
 Head and tail up, like chicken-cocks in laying-time.

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 ABBREVIATIONS.

|          |                           |       |                                 |
|----------|---------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| ALA.     | Alabama.                  | MISS. | Mississippi.                    |
| ARK.     | Arkansas.                 | MO.   | Missouri.                       |
| C. H.    | Court House.              | N. C. | North Carolina.                 |
| CONN.    | Connecticut.              | N. H. | New Hampshire.                  |
| DEL.     | Delaware.                 | N. M. | New Mexico.                     |
| F. F. V. | First Family of Virginia. | N. Y. | New York.                       |
| GA.      | Georgia.                  | O.    | Ohio.                           |
| IA.      | Iowa.                     | O. K. | Oll Korrekt, i. e. All correct. |
| ILL.     | Illinois.                 | O. T. | Oregon Territory.               |
| IND.     | Indiana.                  | PA.   | Pennsylvania.                   |
| K. T.    | Kanzas Territory.         | R. I. | Rhode Island.                   |
| KY.      | Kentucky.                 | S. C. | South Carolina.                 |
| LA.      | Louisiana.                | TENN. | Tennessee.                      |
| M. C.    | Member of Congress.       | V.    | A five dollar bill.             |
| MASS.    | Massachusetts.            | VA.   | Virginia.                       |
| MD.      | Maryland.                 | VT.   | Vermont.                        |
| ME.      | Maine.                    | W. T. | Washington Territory.           |
| MICH.    | Michigan.                 | X.    | A ten dollar bill.              |

















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